

Sent 5 Dec 2008

president@hpc-uk.org

Please forward

Dear Dr van der Gaag

I am preparing evidence to submit to the (much delayed) consultation on the Pittillo report. In order to do so, I would appreciate clarification of how the HPC interprets the criterion for new registrants, as [stated here](#)

"Practise based on evidence of efficacy "

It is not clear to me how this is to be interpreted in the case of the subjects of the Pitillo report, namely Acupuncture, Herbal Medicine, Traditional Chinese Medicine

Acupuncture has been the subject of a lot of good work now, and the outcome, as summarised by Singh & Ernst, or Bausell, seems to be that, in most cases anyway, that real acupuncture is indistinguishable from sham acupuncture. Insofar as that is true, the 'principles' of meridians. "Qi" and so on are disproved. In any case, the more responsible wing of the acupuncture business, the Medical Acupuncture society, already disavow all the stuff about meridians, How can appropriate standards of training possibly be defined when acupuncturist themselves disagree profoundly about whether meridians exist or not?

Traditional Chinese Medicine (and much of Herbal medicine too) are different, insofar as they are almost totally untested (and, it must be said, their practitioners show little inclination to do proper tests),

In the light of these considerations, I should have thought myself that your registration criteria precluded the registration that Pitillo recommends. But that is just my view and what I need to complete my evidence is *your* interpretation of "Practise based on evidence of efficacy "

I'm sure you'll agree that this is quite important, not least for the reputation of the HPC

Best regards
David Colquhoun