



香港物理治療師協會

Hong Kong Physiotherapists' Union

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By Email and Mail

Supplementary Medical Professional Council (SMPC)

Boards and Councils (Branch) Office,

2/F, Shun Feng International Centre,

182 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Attn: Dr Homer TSO Wei-kwok, SBS, JP, Chairman

21st August, 2017

Dear Dr. Tso :

Re: Bowen Therapy by Occupational Therapist (OT)

Referring to the article posted at Oriental Daily on the 5th August 2017 (Appendix 1), we would like to express our concerns about Bowen Techniques (BT) being applied as a treatment to patients by occupational therapists at the Prince of Wales Hospital and possibly other hospitals under Hospital Authority (HA).

According to the article (Appendix 1), the statement that “「寶雲治療」，幾下簡單的推揉動作已大大改善痛症，戒甩對手帶的依賴。” is exaggerating, and the experiment on the 10 subjects which states that “.....該院去年做實驗，隨機抽五名病人進行六周、每周一節的寶雲治療，另五人以佩戴手帶的傳統方式治療。結果發現，前者痛症程度由四成減至兩成，後者維持三成。.....” is misleading to the public as well. We think the information is not objectively verifiable nor presented in a balanced manner (Code of Practice for Registered Occupational Therapists (COP) Part III pt.6.2). The release of this non-evidence based report through the mass media could easily **mislead potential end users' expectation** and possibly their choice of treatment means.

It should be noted that the Bowen Technique, which claims to utilize the *move* to the body to promote healing process, is regarded as a kind of physical manipulation. However, with reference to the “Review of the Australian Government Rebate on Natural Therapies for Private Health Insurance” (Appendix 2), **Bowen Therapy is non-evidence based** and is out-listed in the insurance coverage. Being a local public health care provider, registered professionals should exercise their credibility for the well-being of the public health under their code of practice! Whether the experiment has sought prior ethical approval from HA for this non evidence based practice is



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questionable. After all, **patients indicated for manual therapy should be referred to relevant professional** who is competent to select and perform appropriate technique(s) accordingly (COP Part I pt.5 & pt.6).

We have to stress that physiotherapists have a long history of being the experts in manual therapy, and our practice is strongly based on research evidence. It is internationally recognized that performing manual therapy techniques is an integral part of the routine physiotherapy treatment, together with exercise therapy and electrotherapy, to effectively treat various musculoskeletal conditions for related body parts. Manual therapy for treating musculoskeletal disorders in terms of soft tissue techniques is one of the core modules for physiotherapy undergraduate training. There are 4 core subjects with over 400 hours of training in the undergraduate curriculum, and passing the practical test components in these subjects is mandatory. The selection and application of manual therapy techniques need to be founded on sound scientific knowledge of biomechanics and kinesiology, which is within the unique expertise of physiotherapists. With enhanced clinical experience and advanced post-graduate studies, manipulative physiotherapists contribute effective treatment to meet patients' needs, and this has been well acknowledged both locally and internationally. The International Federation of Orthopaedic Manipulative Therapists (IFOMT) under the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) was established in the early seventies to **signify the expertise of physiotherapists in manual therapy**, of which the practice is also supported by local statutory provision (Cap.359 Sch.).

It is hope that SMPC being the governing body of the concerned professionals could help to delineate our professional scope of practice for the best interest of the public health.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,

Eleanor Chan (Mrs.), President
Hong Kong Physiotherapists' Union

c.c.

Dr. LEUNG Pak Yin, Chief Executive of Hospital Authority

Dr Ruby LEE Siu-yin, JP, Chairman of Occupational Therapists Board

Professor HUNG Leung-kim, Chairman of Physiotherapists Board