MINDFULNESS & MEDITATION:

Concept, Origins & Development:

Used traditionally with yoga practice, but now generally accepted as a practice of its own. Meditation is similar to mindfulness, which is a popular relaxation technique that focuses a person's attention on the present. It is not subject to statutory regulation in the UK.

There are two voluntary regulatory bodies for complementary practitioners such as meditation instructors: the General Regulatory Council for Complementary Therapies (GRCCT) and the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC) funded and supported by Department of Health. Registration is not mandatory, although may demonstrate qualifications, training and professional standards.

MINDFULNESS & MEDITATION OBJECTIVES

Used typically to help with conditions such as anxiety, depression and chronic pain, the goal of meditation is to go beyond the mind and experience our essential calmness and wellbeing. There is more than one way to practice mindfulness, but the goal of any mindfulness technique is to achieve a state of alert, focused relaxation by deliberately paying attention to thoughts, emotions and sensations without judgment. The mind itself being the most difficult obstacle standing between ourselves and this awareness.

MINDFULNESS & MEDITATION REGULATIONS & LEGAL

Meditation instructors who practice from their own clinic (including home-based clinics) and play background music during sessions must hold licences from PRS for Music and PPL. A PRS for Music licence costs around £80 (excluding VAT) per year. Therapists should check whether the premises owner or main occupier already has PRS for Music and PPL licences. It is the responsibility of the premises owner or main occupier to ensure that the correct licences are held.

The Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 (CCRs) require meditation instructors to provide consumers (meaning anyone booking meditation sessions for purposes unconnected to their business or profession) with specific pre-contract information.

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Order 1978 place a duty of care on meditation instructors to protect the health and safety of their clients and anyone else who may be affected by their business activities.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and equivalent legislation in Northern Ireland, all employers, and those who are self-employed, are required to undertake a risk assessment of their workplace and work activities. In practice, this means assessing the risks that might be present at premises where meditation sessions are held. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published a guide to carrying out a risk assessment, which can be viewed at www.hse.gov.uk/risk/controlling-risks.htm.

Meditation instructors should assess the potential risks they face from working one-to-one with clients. The HSE also provides guidance on lone working and workplace health, safety and welfare at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf and www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg244.htm respectively.

Under the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, meditation instructors must regularly assess the safety of portable electrical appliances, such as portable CD players by carrying out regular visual checks and arranging formal PAT (portable appliance testing) every 12 months (www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/faq-portable-appliance-testing.htm).

MINDFULNESS & MEDITATION TRAINING & QUALIFICATION

The British School of Meditation runs regular five-day teacher training courses at its centres across England and Wales. Topics covered include the benefits of meditation, scientific evidence to support meditation practice, types and techniques of meditation, and how to develop a meditation business. Courses are accredited by Ascentis and cost £990 (paid in three instalments). Go to www.teaching-meditation.co.uk for more information.

Gateway Workshops runs a one-day Meditation Teachers course costing £160. The course is accredited by the Guild of Holistic Therapists and by the British Association of Beauty Therapy & Cosmetology (Babtac) and is run at a range of venues across the UK or is available via distance learning. more details at www.gatewayworkshops.co.uk/spiritual_courses/meditation-courses/.
Complementary medicine (CAM) contributed £5.7 billion to UK healthcare spending in 2015 and this is expected to grow to £6.7 billion by 2020.

'Surviving or Thriving? The State of the UK's Mental Health', published by the Mental Health Foundation in 2017, revealed that 65% of people surveyed said that they had experienced a mental health problem. According to research by the Centre for Mental Health, more than 90 million working days are lost each year due to mental health problems, costing employers around £26 billion.

According to Mintel, one in six people in Britain has tried mindfulness therapy. It is especially popular with busy parents of children under the age of five, 25% of whom attempted to use mindfulness to cope with the pressures of parenthood.

Companies are now offering mindfulness courses to their employees to improve leadership and sales performance.

According to PwC, £100 million was spent on health apps in the UK in 2015, and by 2020 this is expected to increase to £460 million, around 1,300 meditation and mindfulness apps available to download. 'Headspace' is reportedly the most popular meditation app and is valued at around $250 million. Meditation apps typically charge users from around £8 per month, although some charge a one-off upfront fee starting from around £4. The best-known apps include Headspace, Calm, Buddhify, the Mindfulness App, Smiling Mind, Omvana, Stop and Take a Break.
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REIKI:

Concept, Origins & Development:

Reiki is an ancient complementary therapy used to promote relaxation, emotional health and general wellbeing, also claimed to relieve pain and aid in recovery. Practitioners place on or near the clients body and use intuition and their training to transfer energy healing, achieving balance and flow creating harmony and wellbeing (reiki translates as Universal Life Energy).

Founded by Mikao Usui in early 20th Century and has evolved as a result of his research, experience and dedication. The whole person is treated as opposed to specific areas, however the Reiki practitioners are not trained in diagnosis and will not predict any specific outcome from treatment.

REIKI OBJECTIVES

Treatments are given by the practitioner placing their hands in a pre-determined sequence of positions, in a gentle, light manner, there is no massage or manipulation. Sensations such as heat or coolness, tingling or throbbing may be felt, or at times very little, but most people experience sense of well being and deep relaxation or sometimes a treatment is energising. It can also lead to a release of emotions, or symptoms known as a healing reaction such as headaches nausea or flu like symptoms. It would normally be recommended to have a sequence of treatments in a short period of time.
• The Data Protection Act Online Training Course, which is provided by High Speed Training and costs £25 (excluding VAT). The course covers the current DPA 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which will be introduced into UK law in 2018. Topics covered include keeping data secure, what to do if data is lost, and what is required under the GDPR.

• Consumer Rights Training for Retailers - Services, which is a 35-minute online course provided by iHasco that costs £25 (excluding VAT). The course briefly explains the Consumer Rights Act 2015, what it applies to and how it relates to services. Other topics covered include handling customer complaints, fair wording of terms and conditions, notices and contracts, and handling disputes, including alternative dispute resolution.

Reiki practitioners who play background music during sessions must hold licences from PRS for Music and PPL. A PRS for Music licence costs around £80 (excluding VAT) per year. Therapists should check whether the premises owner or main occupier already has PRS for Music and PPL licences. It is the responsibility of the premises owner or main occupier to ensure that the correct licences are held.
The Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 (CCRs) require therapists to provide consumers (meaning anyone booking sessions for purposes unconnected to their business or profession) with specific pre-contract information before confirming their appointment. The pre-contract information must cover the instructor’s pricing, payment and cancellation terms.

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 place a duty of care on meditation instructors to protect the health and safety of their clients and anyone else who may be affected by their business activities.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and equivalent legislation in Northern Ireland, all employers, and those who are self-employed, are required to undertake a risk assessment of their workplace and work activities. In practice, this means assessing the risks that might be present at premises where meditation sessions are held. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published a guide to carrying out a risk assessment, which can be viewed at www.hse.gov.uk/risk/controlling-risks.htm.

Reiki instructors should assess the potential risks they face from working one-to-one with clients. The HSE also provides guidance on lone working and workplace health, safety and welfare at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf and www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg244.htm respectively.

Under the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, meditation instructors must regularly assess the safety of portable electrical appliances, such as portable CD players by carrying out regular visual checks and arranging formal PAT (portable appliance testing) every 12 months (www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/faq-portable-appliance-testing.htm).

A Reiki practitioner requires several types of insurance cover, including:

- Public liability insurance, which covers the Reiki practitioner against claims from clients, suppliers and members of the public injured or adversely affected because of its activities.
- Professional indemnity insurance (which may include treatment risks insurance) to cover a Reiki practitioner against claims of negligence (for example for failing to obtain informed consent from clients before providing treatment), breach of the Data Protection Act 1988 or breach of copyright (for example by playing music in clients' homes without a PRS for Music licence).
- Legal expenses insurance, which provides cover for pursuing claims arising from contractual disputes with suppliers or landlords.
- Business equipment insurance, which provides cover for professional equipment kept in the home, such as treatment couches and laptops, that may not be covered under household policies.
Cover for use of any vehicles for business purposes, which must include a minimum of third-party cover. Cover can also be obtained for equipment stored in the Reiki practitioner’s vehicle.

**REKI TRAINING & QUALIFICATION**

There are currently no qualifications legally required to practice Reiki. However to register with the voluntary regulatory bodies, Reiki practitioners must hold a recognized qualification. Most professional indemnity insurance providers will only provide cover for Reiki practitioners who have completed formal training. Traditionally there are three degrees of Reiki Training:

- **Reiki 1 (Shoden).** Completion of training at this level qualifies a practitioner to treat themselves, their friends and family.

- **Reiki 2 (Okuden).** Completion of training at this level qualifies a practitioner to treat members of the public and join a professional association representing Reiki practitioners.

- **Reiki 3 (Shinpiden or Master).** Completion of training at this level qualifies a practitioner to teach Reiki to others.

Level 1, 2 and 3 courses usually take one or two days to complete. Practitioners are typically expected to spend between three and twelve months practising their skills between course levels. In some cases, Reiki 3 is split into two separate levels: Inner Master and Master Teacher.

Practitioners who are members of the UK Reiki Federation must complete a minimum amount of continuing professional development (CPD) each year. More information about CPD requirements, including requirements for each category of membership and CPD logs, is available to members of the Federation.

Examples of CPD options include:

- Various courses approved by the UK Reiki Federation. Details of courses are available to Federation members only, and can be accessed at [www.reikifed.co.uk/education-training/continuing-professional-development-cpd](http://www.reikifed.co.uk/education-training/continuing-professional-development-cpd).

- Workshops.
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- CPD courses vetted and approved by the Federation of Holistic Therapists (FHT).

Reiki practitioners can also keep up to date with developments in their sector and improve their awareness of trends by attending events and reading trade journals and industry resources.

REIKI KEY ASPECTS OF GOOD CLINICAL PRACTICE

The prices charged by Reiki practitioners vary according to the practitioner's experience and location, and the level of competition from local clinics, salons, spas and other practitioners.

Reiki treatment sessions typically last between 30 and 90 minutes and are usually priced at between £25 and £70 per session. Initial consultations may be priced at a premium.

Membership of a trade body can provide a wide range of individual and business benefits. Relevant bodies include:

The UK Reiki Federation (UKRF, www.reikifed.co.uk), which represents Reiki students, practitioners and teachers in the UK. Applicants for practitioner membership must 'prove a lineage to Mikao Usui', meaning they must provide evidence that their teacher's line of teaching goes back to Usui himself. They must also hold a UKRF-approved Reiki 2 qualification or higher, and have completed a Reiki 1 qualification at least nine months previously. Practitioner members benefit from a listing in the UKRF online directory, access to CPD and discounted medical malpractice and professional indemnity insurance. The annual membership fee is £55. Reiki practitioners who do not meet the criteria for practitioner membership may be able to join the UKRF as an associate member.

The Reiki Association (TRA, www.reikiassociation.co.uk), which represents professional Reiki practitioners and people who practice Reiki on themselves, family and friends only. Verified membership of TRA entitles the practitioner to fast-track registration with the Complementary and
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Natural Healthcare Council. To join as a verified member, a practitioner must carry out a treatment in the presence of a TRA verifier. They must also hold a Reiki 2 qualification, demonstrate a lineage to Usui, have received at least 100 Reiki treatments and provided at least 75 treatments. Other membership benefits include discounted medical malpractice and professional indemnity insurance and a subscription to 'Touch' magazine. Annual membership costs £65.

The Complementary Therapists Association (CThA, www.ctha.com), which is a professional body representing complementary therapists, including Reiki practitioners, in the UK and Republic of Ireland. CThA members benefit from a listing in the Embody for You directory of complementary therapists (www.embodyforyou.com), along with business, legal, tax and health and safety advice, discounted public liability insurance and promotional opportunities. The annual membership fee is £60.

The Federation of Holistic Therapists (FHT, www.fht.org.uk), which is a professional body representing complementary therapists in the UK and Ireland. Members benefit from a listing in the FHT register of accredited therapists (subject to qualification requirements), discounts on seminars and workshops, access to local support and guidance, and regular newsletters. The annual membership fee at the FHT member grade is £60.

The Reiki Council approves practitioner qualifications that meet the National Occupational Standards in Reiki, meet the Reiki Council's core curriculum and are recognised by the General Regulatory Council for Complementary Therapies (GRCCT) and the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC).

Examples of qualifications approved by the Reiki Council include:

- The Level 3 Diploma in Reiki accredited by ITEC, which involves 250 guided learning hours and consists of compulsory units in Reiki, anatomy and physiology, and professional conduct and business awareness [http://athenaschool.co.uk/course/itec-diploma-in-reiki/](http://athenaschool.co.uk/course/itec-diploma-in-reiki/) for details.

A full list of qualifications approved by the Reiki Council can be downloaded from [www.reikicouncil.org.uk/Course-Verification.php](http://www.reikicouncil.org.uk/Course-Verification.php).

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) contributed £5.7 billion to UK healthcare spending in 2015 and this is expected to grow to £6.7 billion by 2020.

According to 'Complementary and Alternative Treatments', a factsheet published by charity Rethink Mental Illness, Reiki "may help" with symptoms of depression and stress after six weekly sessions, although limited research has been carried out on the effectiveness of Reiki as a treatment for mental health.

According to research by the Centre for Mental Health, more than 90 million working days are lost each year due to mental health problems, costing employers around £26 billion.

Information about managing pain caused by Parkinson's disease published by charity Parkinson's UK, last updated in June 2016, lists Reiki as one of several complementary therapies that have been

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found to help with pain relief. Other therapies include acupuncture, the Alexander technique, the Bowen technique and the Feldenkrais method. Go to www.parkinsons.org.uk/information-and-support/pain for details.

Reiki practitioners face competition from other complementary therapists providing the same or similar treatments, such as other Reiki practitioners, crystal healers and reflexologists. More than 5,000 complementary health professionals are registered with the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC).

Complementary therapy clinics, beauty salons, hairdressing salons and health spas provide both competition and opportunities for individual Reiki practitioners. Research carried out by the Centre for Economic and Business Research found that 12 new independent beauty and grooming salons had opened each week in the previous 12 months (a total of 626 salons), which was the highest increase of all types of independent trader.

Anyone starting up as a Reiki practitioner will benefit from training in general business and enterprise skills. Relevant courses include:


- The Fundamentals of Social Media Marketing, which is a collection of six free online courses run by Hootsuite Podium. Topics covered include optimising social media profiles (on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube), developing a social media strategy, building an online community of customers and creating online content that will engage followers' attention. Go to https://education.hootsuite.com/collections for more information.
ACUPUNCTURE:

Concept, Origins & Development:

Practiced for thousands of years in China and the Far East, acupuncture is traced back to between the first century BC and the first century AD, and all styles of acupuncture practiced currently around the world can be traced back to the roots of the text found in the book of Chinese Medicine, the Classic of Internal Medicine of the Yellow Emperor.

Post war the therapy was revived as a complimentary therapy alongside modern western medical practices in China, and in 1948 Chinese Medicine was again nurtured and encouraged to grow, by 1978 whole hospitals and research departments were dedicated to Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Today traditional acupuncture is practiced worldwide and proven effective. More and more people are taking the option of complimentary therapy with standard health care.

ACUPUNCTURE OBJECTIVES

Acupuncture is a complementary therapy that involves the insertion of fine needles into the skin at specific points on the body. It is used to treat a range of conditions, such as lower back pain, infertility and depression, and to prevent illness, aid recovery and promote general wellbeing.

Acupuncture based on basic principles, looks at the holistic effects within body and mind, and views pain and illness and signs that the body is not in balance, the aim being to promote positive qi and equilibrium.
ACUPUNCTURE REGULATIONS & LEGAL

Acupuncture is not statutorily regulated in the UK, but most acupuncturists are members of the British Acupuncture Council (BAcC), the leading professional body for the practice of 'traditional' acupuncture in the UK. Others are registered with the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC), which is a voluntary regulator for complementary health practitioners who offer 'microsystems' acupuncture in the UK. Although membership of the BAcC or registration with the CNHC are not mandatory, they demonstrate the therapist's qualifications, training and professional standards.

Microsystems acupuncture (which is a less 'holistic' modern variation of traditional acupuncture) is the only form of acupuncture that is regulated by the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC). It involves techniques that can be taught in relatively short, non-degree-level courses. However, many Microsystems acupuncture courses can only be studied by individuals with previous experience or training in relevant subjects, such as massage therapists, physiotherapists and chiropractors.

There are no qualifications legally required to practise as an acupuncturist. However, in order to join the British Acupuncture Council (BAcC), which is the leading professional body representing acupuncturists in the UK, a practitioner must hold a degree-level qualification in acupuncture. Most professional indemnity insurance providers will only provide cover for acupuncturists who have qualifications that have been accredited by a recognised professional body.

In order to register with the CNHC as a Microsystems acupuncturist, a practitioner must:

- Hold a Microsystems acupuncture qualification that has been approved by the Acupuncture Society (the only professional body recognised by the CNHC as a verifying organisation for Microsystems acupuncture); or
- Have achieved competency to the level of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Microsystems acupuncture through at least three years' experience and any relevant training.

ACUPUNCTURE TRAINING & QUALIFICATION

The British Acupuncture Accreditation Board (BAAB, a sister company of the BAcC) accredits acupuncture qualifications that are taught at honours degree level and involve at least 3,600 hours of learning, including a minimum of 400 hours in a clinical setting.

Microsystems acupuncture training
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Go to [www.acupuncturesociety.org.uk/accredited-courses](http://www.acupuncturesociety.org.uk/accredited-courses) for a full list of courses accredited by the Acupuncture Society.

Acupuncturists who are members of the BAcC must complete at least 30 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) each year ([www.acupuncture.org.uk/public-content/effective-practice/continuing-professional-development.html](http://www.acupuncture.org.uk/public-content/effective-practice/continuing-professional-development.html)).

Acupuncturists can also keep up to date with developments in their sector and improve their awareness of trends by attending events and reading trade journals and industry resources.

**ACUPUNCTURE KEY ASPECTS OF GOOD CLINICAL PRACTICE**

The prices charged by acupuncturists vary according to the acupuncturist’s experience and location, and the level of local competition.

Typical prices charged by acupuncturists include:

- £20 to £45 for a 60-minute initial consultation session.
- £40 to £60 for subsequent 45- or 60-minute sessions, or up to £90 in London.
- £25 to £40 for a 45-minute session of auricular acupuncture.
- £55 to £140 for a 60- or 90-minute session of facial acupuncture.

Some acupuncturists offer discounts on block bookings of treatments.
HERBALISM:

Concept, Origins & Development:

Herbalism, a traditional study of herbs in their whole essence of roots to flowers and have been used for their medicinal properties for thousands of years. Herbalist are those who have studied recognition and use of herbs to help treat the underlying cause of conditions as opposed to the symptoms alone.

An increasing number of herbal medicines are now proven to work beyond reasonable doubt. The introduction of the Traditional Herb Directive in April 2012 also means that herbal medicines are safe and often safer than conventional medicines, which have a shorter history. Of course, herbal medicine goes far beyond doctors suggesting patients buying herbal medicines over the counter. Medical herbalists are the alchemists of mother nature’s gift.’ Dr Michael Dixon

HERBALISM OBJECTIVES

Herbalists provide herbal remedies for a range of health conditions, including infertility, impotence, depression, anxiety and other mental health problems, and to aid weight loss or improve general health and wellbeing. Some also supply herbal food supplements and cosmetics. Herbalism is not widely available through the NHS, and most clients pay for their treatment privately.

Herbal remedies must have a marketing authorisation or a traditional herbal registration from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) before they can be placed on the market. However, an exception applies that allows herbalists to prepare and supply unlicensed herbal remedies following a one-to-one consultation with the client (the herbalist exemption).

Herbalism is not statutorily regulated in the UK. However, belonging to a professional association, such as the Association of Natural Medicine, the National Institute of Medical Herbalists, the British Herbal Medicine Association or the Association of Master Herbalists, can be a way for herbalists to demonstrate their commitment to professional standards.
Herbalists must ensure that the products they supply, either on a stand-alone retail basis or following herbalism consultations, comply with product-specific regulations:

- **Herbal medicines.** These are subject to medicines legislation, which is enforced by the Medical and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), the UK’s statutory regulator for medicines and medical devices.

- **Herbal food products.** These are subject to food law, which is enforced by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and other enforcement authorities. Examples of herbal food products include fresh and dried herbs, herbal teas and herbal confectionery.

- **Herbal food supplements.** These are subject to food supplements regulations and food law, including regulations requiring food business premises to be registered with the local authority environmental health department. Food supplements regulations are enforced by the Department of Health in England and Wales, and the FSA in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

- **Herbal cosmetics.** These are subject to cosmetics legislation, which is enforced by local authority trading standards and other enforcement authorities. Examples of herbal cosmetics include herb-based hand and face creams.
THE HERBALIST EXEMPTION

Under Section 3 of the Human Medicines Regulations 2012, the herbalist exemption allows herbalists to prepare and supply herbal medicines that do not have a marketing authorisation or a THR, provided:

LABELLING REQUIREMENTS

The Human Medicines Regulations 2012 require all medicines to provide the information set out in Schedule 2, Part 1 and Schedule 27 on the outer and inner packaging and information leaflets respectively.

The information that must be provided includes:

- The medicine’s name.
- Where the product contains up to three active substances, the common name of each active substance, such as ‘black cohosh’ and ‘devil’s claw’.
- The amount of each active substance, expressed qualitatively and quantitatively per dosage unit (such as per gram) or for a given volume or weight (such as per five-gram dose).
- The method of administration.
- The expiry date, in the form month/year.

The outer and inner packaging of herbal medicines with a THR must also include a statement that explains that the medicine is a traditional herbal medicine, for use for specific purposes by reason of long-standing use (for example, ‘A traditional herbal medicinal product used for the relief of symptoms of the menopause such as hot flushes, night sweats and temporary changes in mood based on traditional use only.’) and a warning advising the user to consult a doctor if their symptoms persist during the safe use of the medicine.

COSMETICS REGULATION

Herbalists supplying herbal cosmetics must comply with the Cosmetic Products Enforcement Regulations 2013, which implement the EU Cosmetics Directive into UK law. Under the Regulations, it is an offence to supply a cosmetic product that may cause harm to health when used, or to sell products that contain certain specified ingredients or that have been tested on animals.

The Cosmetic Products Enforcement Regulations 2013 also stipulate information that must be displayed on cosmetic products' containers and packaging. This includes, for example, the name and address or registered office of the product manufacturer or the person responsible for marketing the product; a list of ingredients, preceded by the word 'Ingredients'; and the words 'Best used before the end of' and the use-by date, which must be expressed as day/month/year or month/year.
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if the product is likely to become unsafe or unsuitable for its intended use within 30 months of being made.

HERBALISM TRAINING & QUALIFICATION

There are no qualifications legally required to start up and trade as a herbalist. However, in order to join the National Institute of Medical Herbalists (NIMH), which is the leading professional body representing herbalists in the UK, a practitioner must hold a degree-level qualification in herbal medicine accredited by the NIMH or the European Herbal and Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association (EHTPA), or demonstrate an equivalent level of skills and experience. Most professional indemnity insurance providers will only provide cover for herbalists who have qualifications that have been accredited by a recognised professional body.

Herbalists who are members of the Federation of Holistic Therapists (FHT) must complete at least 10 points worth of continuing professional development (CPD) each membership year (www.fht.org.uk/continuing-professional-development-cpd). Members of the National Institute of Medical Herbalists (NIMH), the British Herbal Medicine Association (BHMA) and the Association of Master Herbalists (AMH) are also expected to undertake regular CPD to keep their professional skills and knowledge up to date.

Herbalists can also keep up to date with developments in their sector and improve their awareness of trends by attending events and reading professional journals and sector resources.

HERBALISM KEY ASPECTS OF GOOD CLINICAL PRACTICE

Current market issues affecting start-up and established herbalists include the following:

- In November 2017, NHS England recommended that the Department of Health place herbal medicines on a prescription ‘blacklist’, which prevents them from being prescribed on the NHS. The reason for the recommendation was a lack of ‘clear or robust’ evidence to support the provision of herbal medicines on the NHS. Go to www.england.nhs.uk/2017/11/prescription-curbs-to-free-up-hundreds-of-millions-of-pounds-for-frontline-care for details.

- The same FHT member survey also found that 86% of complementary therapists are self-employed and 47% offer treatments from their own home. Word-of-mouth referral was identified by 84% of respondents as the most effective way to generate new clients.
'Lay' herbalists (ie herbalists with no medical qualifications) face competition from GPs, dentists, nurses, midwives and other healthcare professionals who practise herbalism, and can combine herbalism with conventional medical treatment. Subject to profession, they can also supply pharmacy and prescription-only herbal medicines.

Further sources of competition for start-up herbalists include:

- Other complementary health practitioners, such as nutritional therapists, acupuncturists and reflexologists. In February 2013 (the latest comprehensive registration figures available), more than 5,000 complementary health practitioners were registered with the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC).
- Leading high street health food and supplement retailers such as Holland and Barrett and Neal's Yard Remedies, which stock a wide range of herbal medicines and often employ qualified advisers.
- Leading high street chemists such as Boots and Superdrug, which sell conventional medicines and herbal medicines in-store and online.
- Supermarkets such as Asda and Tesco, which both supply a wide range of health food and supplements, including herbal medicines, in larger stores and online.