



EXCITING CAREER PROSPECTS AS NATURAL THERAPY INDUSTRY EXPANDS

"Career opportunities abound in the natural therapy professions in Australia. There have never been the opportunities that currently exist for professionally trained healthcare professionals,"

Ms Maggie Sands, a spokesperson for the Australian Traditional Medicine Society (ATMS) said this today,

Current trends both internationally and in Australia indicate that the health and wellness industry throughout the world is expanding at a rapid pace. The Australian Institute of Health and Wellness statistics show that Australians spend about \$300 million on complementary medicine therapies and nearly \$700 million on complementary medicine.

This growth is also reflected in the Australian Government providing \$4 million to the University of Western Sydney to help establish a National Institute for Complementary Medicine. The institute will develop national priorities for complementary medical research and will co-ordinate work on these priorities with other research bodies, with an emphasis on clinical trials and the studies of herbal medicines. The Commonwealth Government has also provided \$5 million in grants through the National Health and Medical Research Council to investigate the use and effectiveness of complementary medicine.

Other research indicates the growing interest in bodywork modalities as well and show that approximately 70% of the Australian adult population has chosen a Chiropractor/Osteopath or a Remedial Massage Therapist as their preferred healthcare professional.

Ms Sands also said, "Those looking for a change or a new career should think about the highly rewarding, billion dollar profession of complementary medicine when they are considering career choices."

The Australian Traditional Medicine Society (ATMS) established in 1984 has set exemplary standards for Natural Therapy practitioners both in ingestive and bodywork modalities. ATMS represents 11,000 healthcare professionals who play a major role in assisting the community in retaining or gaining their sense of wellbeing and some 70 plus colleges throughout Australia who have demonstrated excellence in their ability to train Natural Therapy practitioners to a high level of competency.

The philosophy of the ATMS colleges is to teach empirical knowledge combined with the latest scientific information regarding the effects of complementary medicines and complementary therapies plus sound client care and clinical practice skills. The majority of ATMS accredited colleges have been in existence for over a decade and in some cases over 3 decades.

The success of the ATMS colleges has been driven by a sincere interest in those wanting to assist others as a qualified Practitioner offering often an extended range of Natural Therapy services which may include a variety of bodywork modalities, herbal medicine, naturopathic nutrition, homeopathy, chiropractic, osteopathy or acupuncture.

Ms Sands said, "The ATMS colleges have led the revolution and the expansion of the popularity of complementary medicine in Australia."

The popularity and success of the complementary medicine profession is undeniably demonstrated by the interest of health funds in Australia. Currently health funds pay rebates to their clients for the majority of natural therapy modalities. The health funds' benchmark for assessing the qualification of a natural therapy practitioner predominantly relies on the practitioner's membership in a bona fide association like ATMS.



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Ms Sands said "ATMS accredits Colleges who educate and qualify practitioners who then seek eligibility for their services to be approved suitable for client health fund rebates."

Ms Sands said, "The success and rapid expansion of the natural therapy professions is intrinsically linked with the success of individual complementary medicine practitioners and their training at accredited ATMS colleges."

An example of this success is one ATMS College, the School of Integrated Body Therapy (SIBT), situated on the Central Coast of New South Wales. SIBT having been established since 1985, has been responsible in developing Natural Therapy services in a wide variety of country towns in NSW including Broken Hill, Muswellbrook, Tamworth and the like by offering competency based professional training for Massage Practitioners in these locations. By invitation, SIBT has successfully taken their competency based training to Asia and has completed some 24 training programs in Vietnam, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Ms Sands, also Principal of the School of Integrated Body Therapy (SIBT), said, "The ATMS accredited Colleges have profoundly assisted in the development of education in the complementary medicine field, so much so that SIBT has been invited to train Asian practitioners often well experienced in traditional methods of healing but seeking more western style modalities that have proven exceptionally popular in Australia. Examples of these modalities include trigger point therapy, sports injuries techniques, remedial massage and more."

ATMS, the leader of complementary medicine in the Southern Hemisphere, continues to expand as the wellbeing industry expands and as more qualified and competent practitioners graduate from quality ATMS college courses.

For further information on ATMS Colleges, visit www.atms.com.au