



## **2009 Members' Annual Report**

The key objective of the past 12 months was to maintain the FHT as the UK and Ireland's largest and leading professional association for complementary, beauty and sports therapists. The FHT is ideally placed to achieve this through its unique position as the only professional association that is totally independent of any training provider.

While there are therapists encouraged to join small professional associations commercially linked to the training school from which they graduated, the FHT's independence enables it to effectively influence and develop the standards of professionalism, education and complementary healthcare integration without a conflict of interest.

During the past 12 months this position has enabled the FHT to work closely with employers, educators, regulators and other stakeholders in the complementary, beauty and sports industries to provide unique and quality led benefits that assist its members as practitioners in their professional therapies.

### **Governing Council**

The FHT continues to be expertly directed by its Governing Council made up of experienced professional therapists. We were sad to see Lorraine Davis step down from the role as President in 2009 after 2 influential years directing the Council. However, the Council was fortunate not to lose Lorraine's considerable experience and knowledge as she continued to support the organisation in the role of Vice President.

We were extremely fortunate to have Jennifer Wayte, a highly respected professional within the industry, elected by the Council in 2009 to take over the role of FHT President. Jennifer was ideally placed to do so having considerable educational, clinical and public affairs experience. Jennifer has worked tirelessly over the past 12 months towards further raising the profile and reputation of the FHT.

The Governing Council welcomed 2 new members in 2009 adding further strength and depth to the Council. Dr. John Brazier brings experience and knowledge of the international Spa industry and Traditional Chinese Medicine to the Council. Richard Johnson brings additional sports therapy and sports training skills and experience to the Council. Both John and Richard have quickly settled into their roles and along with the rest of the existing Council have been outstanding in their support and representation of members' professional interests.

I would like to thank all Governing Council members for their valued support throughout 2009.

### **FHT Staff**

Some members may still be unaware there are 21 experienced members of staff supporting the Governing Council throughout the year. This dedicated workforce based at the FHT office in Eastleigh, Hampshire supports the organisation in specialist areas

including membership and insurance services, education, publishing, FHTonline, website, local support group administration, accreditation, systems, accounts and marketing. No other professional association has such infrastructure in place to provide the unparalleled services available to professional therapists. To read more about the FHT staff please visit [http://www.fht.org.uk/Homepage/About\\_Us/FHT\\_Staff/](http://www.fht.org.uk/Homepage/About_Us/FHT_Staff/)

Again, I thank the FHT team for another excellent year of membership support.

## **FHT Membership**

After a challenging 2008 which experienced a period of economic downturn, reducing government educational funding and fewer therapy training courses available, the past 12 months has seen the FHT membership stabilise. This has been encouraging when many smaller professional associations have struggled to retain their members. Professional therapists are becoming more discerning in their choice of professional representation enabling the FHT, with almost 50 years experience and reputation, to keep its existing members and also to attract those newly qualified therapists who have had the conviction to enter the profession.

At the end of 2009 the FHT maintained its position as the industry's largest professional association for complementary, sports and beauty therapists representing over 14,000 qualified complementary therapists, over 3,000 beauty therapists and over 2,500 sports and remedial therapists at the end of 2009.

While 2009 saw a year on year decline in newly qualified members, tracking the reduced college intake, an increase in the membership retention rate was particularly pleasing at a time when many therapists found themselves leaving the profession. Member loyalty is the best indicator of member satisfaction and quality of service, and ensuring that our members are able to continue in professional practice continues to be our number one focus.

The FHT Local Support Group network continued to grow reaching an all time high of 82 groups in 2009 maintaining its position as the UK's largest network of professional therapists. In 2009 the network also stretched into Europe with groups opening in the Republic of Ireland and Spain. As an organisation owned by its members, the FHT Local Support Group network is instrumental in co-creation thus ensuring that its members help shape the FHT!

## **FHT Training Congress at Holistic Health**

FHT's flagship Training Congress, held in conjunction with Holistic Health & Beauty UK, moved to the NEC Birmingham in 2009. The UK's largest complementary and beauty trade exhibition attracted over 18,000 visitors in 2009.

The FHT Training Congress continued to grow in 2009 attracting over 1,200 delegates only to be upstaged by an amazing 1,736 delegates in 2010. The FHT Governing Council and staff met many members at the FHT stand and the Training Congress. My thanks are extended to everyone who supported the event.

## **Members' Journal**

In 2009 the FHT Journal, International Therapist, continued to have the largest audited distribution figure in its sector, with an average of 20,699 copies per issue being sent to members, colleges, media houses and healthcare organisations.

The FHT Journal continues to be the leading professional association publication respected for its focus on integrated health, research and educational editorial while maintaining its appeal as a reader-friendly, membership publication.

The third annual Student Therapist magazine was published in 2009 for the 2009/10 college term to promote the professional association to students and lecturers. Over 30,000 copies were distributed to more than 800 colleges and private training providers throughout the UK and at shows/events. The publication and its promotional campaign has helped counter the considerable decline in students undertaking complementary, beauty and sports qualifications following the government's decision to divert funding to the 16-19 diploma. To view the 2009/10 Student Therapist magazine please go to <http://view.vcab.com/?vcabid=eaascaleasgeggh>

## **Voluntary Regulation**

In 2009 the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC) opened an eagerly awaited independent register for complementary therapists. The CNHC is the voluntary regulator for complementary therapies, and is recognised and supported by the Department of Health.

The FHT has supported voluntary regulation since 2002 when the House of Lords' report recommended practitioners of complementary healthcare should be registered and regulated. We believe the CNHC has an appropriate independent and proven infrastructure in place to be successful. Involved at all the key stages of the regulatory process, the FHT has continued to work closely with the CNHC towards ensuring the professional interests of its members are protected. The regulator implementing the FHT's low registration fee proposal supported by the professional association verification scheme demonstrated this. We are proud to be recognised by the CNHC as the only professional association permitted to verify practitioners for all 10 modalities currently on the register.

The FHT worked tirelessly throughout 2009 towards keeping its members up to date with regulatory, legislative, media, campaigning and lobbying activities. Reaching public policy decision-makers and opinion leaders within the integrated health sector, 2012 Olympics and European market was, and continues to be, of paramount importance to FHT and we are pleased to have been effective in ensuring that FHT Members hear about plans, press conferences, policy briefings, publications and presentations that impact on the profession of holistic therapy and integrated health.

## **Educational Standards**

Independent from any training provider, the FHT was able to be represented on the Strategy Committee of Skills for Health and work closely with Skills Active, the Sector Skills Councils (SSC) for the UK health sector and active leisure sector respectively. Skills for Health completed its major review and rationalisation of the existing National Occupational Standards (NOS) for all complementary healthcare disciplines. The FHT was also instrumental in the transfer of the sports massage NOS from Skills Active to Skills for Health. The NOS defines what a competent person should be able to do when they carry out a particular activity or function.

The FHT continues to operate to the UK's highest qualification criteria for membership to a professional association for complementary, beauty and sports therapists. All FHT practitioner members are required to be qualified to at least Practitioner Level 3 within the Qualifications and Credit Framework\* (QCF), and the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework\* (SCQF), the new frameworks for recognising and accrediting awarding body qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and Scotland

respectively. All private training providers' qualifications must meet the NOS and core curriculum for the discipline as determined by Skills for Health and the relevant professional forum respectively.

Where an NOS does not exist, the FHT will conduct a review of the qualification syllabus seeking advice from experts and the generic NOS units to ascertain its quality. An example of this was introduction of a minimum standard for animal therapy where the FHT worked with professional experts in animal therapy. This standard is currently with Skills for Health seeking approval as the minimum standard for qualifications in this therapy.

The FHT became a founder member of the Sports & Remedial Therapy Council (SRTC) in 2009. The SRTC is a collaborative group of experts representing the educational development of sports therapy and remedial therapy. FHT President, Jennifer Wayte, in collaboration with SRTC colleagues wrote the new core curricula for sports therapy and remedial therapy which can be found at [www.thesrtc.org.uk](http://www.thesrtc.org.uk) The SRTC is recognised by the CNHC as the UK's lead body for sports therapy and remedial therapy.

FHT continued to grow its reputation as the leading and most reputable accreditation body for private training providers of complementary, beauty and sports qualifications and CPD courses that are not on the QCF and SCQF.

The FHT accredited 45 qualifications and 64 CPD courses provided by 77 training providers during 2009. Since becoming an accrediting body the FHT has provided this service to over 90 private training schools/colleges and universities. Our accreditation process and procedures is rapidly becoming the industry benchmark. The FHT has created a comprehensive guide to procedures for education courses and CPD accreditation for training providers, which is expected to be the benchmark within the private training provider industry.

\*The QCF and SCQF lists qualifications that meet the qualification criteria set by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) which creates the curricula and frameworks in partnership with the Awarding Organisations.

## **Lobbying**

The FHT continued to lobby government bodies throughout 2009 to raise the profile of the complementary healthcare industry during a year when the demands upon the NHS were, and continue to be, driving towards a patient centred approach to health. This included the FHT lobbying the NHS to address physical and mental health conditions utilising complementary therapies, which in many cases can help patients reduce prescribed medication and positively empower them to improve their own health.

In response to the 2009 guidelines recommending an integrated healthcare approach in the treatment of persistent, non-specific low back pain by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) and the National Clinical Guideline Centre publishing in 2009, the FHT lobbied to have massage therapy included in the recommended manual therapies.

Lord Darzi announced in his NHS Next Stage Review that in 2009, the Department of Health (DH) would start piloting personal health budgets, as a way of giving patients greater control over the services they receive and the providers from which they receive services. The pilots would draw on the experience of other health systems and in social care. Over half the primary care trusts in England applied to become personal health budgets pilot sites. There have been 73 primary care trusts, in 66 sites awarded

provisional pilot status. The pilot programme is now underway and will run for three years until 2012.

The FHT has lobbied, and continues to do so, for patients of the pilot to spend their personal health budgets on a range of non-traditional treatments such as complementary healthcare which may be only a fraction of that used for supplying drugs prescribed for chronically ill patients, many of which are still given in situations where they have little benefit.

With the 2012 Olympic Games only 3 years away and recognising that the demand for sports massage therapists and sports therapists will be high, the FHT worked hard towards ensuring that FHT therapists would be able to benefit from the high demand.

The FHT met with representatives from the English Institute of Sport (EIS), the British Olympic Association (BOA), the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) and the Scottish, English and Welsh Commonwealth Games Councils to discuss the equivalence of sports massage therapist recruitment. The objective of the meeting was to influence the elite sporting organisations to agree to recruit sports massage therapists at level 4 irrespective of their professional association membership. I am pleased to confirm that following lobbying from the FHT, the EIS has now amended their criteria for application to reflect this equivalence.

These are only some examples of how the FHT was able to position itself as the voice of the complementary and sports therapist profession through continued collaborative working, innovative policymaking and best practice. This voice is being heard by more and more stakeholders as they realise that the complementary therapy market value represented by the FHT equates to over 2 hundred million pounds. However, key to this is the ability to grow our critical mass, increase our voice and strengthen our influence. These objectives are only possible through continued growth in membership.

## **Insurance**

At the FHT we feel that good insurance should mirror competencies, the business requirements therapists have, the different environments in which they work and provide a safety net to help protect their business. This is why in October 2009 the FHT became a Financial Services Authority (FSA) regulated professional insurance intermediary enabling the organisation to arrange and administer insurance in-house for our members.

By doing so the FHT was able to review the portfolio of insurance products available to its members and reduce the premiums through reduced administration costs, along with creating simpler document wording and additional cover. These achievements continue to make the FHT insurance products tailor-made for therapists and a leader in their field. No other professional association can offer a one-stop shop to its members ensuring that the product and customer service quality is not compromised by passing the member onto a third party organisation.

## **2009 Financial Accounts**

The FHT continues to operate as a Not for Profit professional association and reinvests 100% of its revenue directly back into membership benefits and in representing the interests of its members.

During 2009 the FHT invested its revenue into membership benefits and services as follows:

Educational Services	15.1%
Membership & Insurance Services	19.2%
Members' Journal	9.8%
Local support groups	12.7%
Members' professional advice	13.6%
Public & employer awareness	13.6%
Head Office administration	<u>16.0%</u>
	100.0%

The 2009 financial accounts are available on the FHT website  
[http://www.fht.org.uk/homepage/footer/about\\_us/](http://www.fht.org.uk/homepage/footer/about_us/)

John French  
Chief Executive