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## **REFLEXOLOGY AND BODY MASSAGE ARE MOST POPULAR COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES SURVEY FINDS**

A survey conducted by Professional Association the FHT, has found that reflexology and body massage are the two most popular complementary therapies demanded by clients, with aromatherapy coming in third. In their annual member survey, the FHT asked its members to rank their treatments in order of popularity, with 51% of therapists listing reflexology in first place, and 48% and 36% ranking body massage and aromatherapy respectively in the top three.

Other findings indicate that 86% of complementary therapists are currently self-employed, and that the highest proportion of therapists (47%) offer treatments out of their own home. What's more, word-of-mouth is the most powerful marketing tool, with 84% referencing this as being the most important method for generating new clients.

Of biggest concern to therapists are the standards in therapy practice and training, and the risk of 'not being taken seriously' (40%), particularly by medical and other healthcare professionals. Those surveyed felt however that being listed on the FHT's Accredited Register helped to address these concerns, as it has been independently approved by the Professional Standards Authority and is widely promoted to the public, potential clients and healthcare commissioners.

When questioned specifically about their clients, members indicated that support for long-term health conditions is the most common reason clients seek complementary treatments, with therapists citing that 73% of clients visit for this reason. Of those visiting for support with a long-term health complaint, ones commonly cited by survey respondents included cancer, arthritis, fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis, and mental health issues, including dementia.

Jennifer Wayte, President of the FHT says, "For us, the survey demonstrates two things; first, that complementary therapies offer well-being benefits which extend beyond the traditional 'pampering', and second that consumer awareness of standards should be a key concern of the industry. While we never claim that complementary therapies can cure or treat medical conditions, they support those affected, helping them to manage their symptoms and cope with the emotional and physical challenges they face on a day-to-day

basis. What's more, concerns raised by our members regarding standards and a lack of recognition from other health professionals means we'll be using the findings and some supporting research to take the benefits of utilising an Accredited Register, further than ever before."

She continues "Choosing a therapist listed on an independently verified register helps to ensure that they meet or exceed expected industry standards and reassures clients that the individual is professional, appropriately qualified and accountable. 89% of our members highlight how valuable this is to their professional practice, and so we are committed to spending the next twelve months building the consumer profile and awareness of our Accredited Register. Individuals can find out more about our register on our website at [www.fht.org.uk/findatherapist](http://www.fht.org.uk/findatherapist)"

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**For more information on the survey or for dedicated articles, please contact:**

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**Notes to editors:**

The FHT Member survey received 598 responses from members, 75% of whom identified themselves as solely complementary therapists, with the remaining 25% identifying themselves as multi-disciplined therapists or solely sports therapists or beauty therapists.

The FHT is the largest and leading professional association for therapists in the UK and Ireland. Established more than 50 years ago, the organisation is overseen by a Governing Council, who represent the three core member sectors; complementary, beauty and sports therapies. The FHT is a not-for-profit organisation, reinvesting for the benefit of the members and the industry, and works to uphold industry standards for education and professional practice. The FHT also holds an Accredited Register of Complementary Therapists, approved by the Professional Standards Authority.