

COMPLAINT NUMBER	17/168
COMPLAINANT	M Taylor
ADVERTISER	Bowen Wellbeing for Women
ADVERTISEMENT	Bowen Wellbeing for Women, Digital Marketing
DATE OF MEETING	30 August 2017
OUTCOME	Settled

Advertisement: The Bowen Wellbeing for Women website, www.bowentherapyaukland.nz, describes the benefits of the Bowen Therapy technique and contains therapeutic claims about the efficacy of Bowen therapy on a wide range of conditions.

The Chair ruled the complaint was Settled.

Complainant, M Taylor, said: A website advertisement for a "Bowen Therapy" contains misleading therapeutic claims regarding its Health Services, in violation of the Therapeutic Health Advertising Code Principle 2a. Because these claims are misleading, the advertisement also fails to observe the high standard of social responsibility required of it by Principle 1. As far as I can tell, there is no evidence to substantiate the claims being made about the service offered.

The likely consumer takeout would be that this service is capable of providing the healing properties that it describes. The claims made imply that this technique has numerous beneficial properties, none of which I was able to find substantiation for.

The language being used strongly implies a powerful therapy, so one would assume that the evidence to support these claims has sufficient weight to warrant them. Effectively, this description covers a broad range of potential ailments, and could be seen to promote the Bowen technique to address a great many conditions.

My concern is that this type of treatment is being used as a catch-all solution and delaying what could be important, evidence based treatment. At the very least, consumers will be spending money on purported health services which have no evidence of efficacy.

It is worth noting that the Australian Department of Health included the Bowen Technique in a review of alternative treatments, and found no evidence to support the techniques efficacy for any condition

In summary, the claims made on the website do not appear to have been adequately substantiated, and should therefore be considered to violate the Therapeutic Health Advertising Code Principle 2a.

The relevant provisions were Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code - Guideline 2(a), Guideline 2(f), Principle 1, Principle 2.

The Chair noted the Complainant's concern that the Advertiser's website contained irresponsible and unsubstantiated claims about Bowen Therapy, which were misleading.

The Chair acknowledged the Advertiser had made changes to the website, removing or amending references which were of concern.

Given the Advertiser's co-operative engagement with the process and the self-regulatory action taken in amending the website, the Chair said that it would serve no further purpose to place the matter before the Complaints Board. The Chair ruled that the matter was settled.

Chair's Ruling: Complaint **Settled**