

<b>COMPLAINT NUMBER</b>	17/416
<b>COMPLAINANT</b>	M Honeychurch
<b>ADVERTISER</b>	Bay Reflexology
<b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>	Bay Reflexology, Digital Marketing
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	6 December 2017
<b>OUTCOME</b>	Settled – advertisement changed/removed

**Advertisement:** The website advertisement for Bay Reflexology, [www.bayreflexology.co.nz](http://www.bayreflexology.co.nz), listed the benefits people with cancer could experience from trying reflexology.

**The Chair ruled the complaint was Settled.**

**Complainant, M Honeychurch, said:** On Bay Reflexology's "Reflexology and cancer" page, therapeutic claims are made about reflexology's ability to "help" with cancer, cancer recovery, cancer related pain and other cancer symptoms:

"There is no reason why you cannot have reflexology if you have cancer, and in fact several studies have shown reflexology to be helpful in cancer patients. It works safely alongside any medical or surgical treatments and may help you tolerate your treatment more easily, recover faster, and generally help you feel a little bit more like yourself.

In particular, clients with cancer may benefit from:

Relaxation, Pain relief, Reduction of anxiety, Lifting of mood, Boosting of the immune system, Hormone balancing, Reduction of nausea, diarrhoea or constipation"

None of the claims above (which all appear to be therapeutic) are backed up with evidence, which means that the advert is presumably in breach of the ASA's Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code Rule 2(a). As unsubstantiated claims, the advert is likely to mislead consumers into thinking that paying for reflexology from Bay Reflexology will help them if they are suffering from cancer, therefore also likely breaching Principle 2.

The testimonial from "Jen C" also appears to breach Rule 2(f), as it's unlikely to be typical and hasn't been shown to be genuine.

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

**The Chair** noted the Complainant's concern that the Advertiser's website contained unsubstantiated claims about the benefits of reflexology, 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 – advertisement changed/removed**