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| <b>COMPLAINT NUMBER</b> | 19/076                          |
| <b>COMPLAINANT</b>      | M Hanna                         |
| <b>ADVERTISER</b>       | Suzy Hawes                      |
| <b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>    | Suzy Hawes, Digital Marketing   |
| <b>DATE OF MEETING</b>  | 8 March 2019                    |
| <b>OUTCOME</b>          | Settled – advertisement removed |

**Advertisement:** The Suzy Hawes website advertisement, [www.suzyhawes.com](http://www.suzyhawes.com), describes Zero Balancing as a powerful body-mind therapy. The advertisement says it can help with various conditions such as relieving aches and pain, improving sleep and relieving stress.

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

**Complainant, M Hanna, said:** The website [suzyhawes.com](http://suzyhawes.com), for a practitioner of Zero Balancing based in Palmerston North, promotes Zero Balancing with a number of unsubstantiated and misleading health claims, contravening rules 1(h) and 2(b) of the Advertising Standards Code, and rule 2(a) of the Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code. The website also misuses scientific terminology in a misleading way that abuses consumers lack of knowledge, contravening rule 1(d) and principle 2 of the Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code.

These noncompliant statements can be found in the Services section of the sites homepage, located at <https://www.suzyhawes.com/>. They include:

By addressing the deepest and densest tissues of the body along with soft tissue and energy fields, Zero Balancing helps to clear blocks in the body's energy flow, amplify vitality and contribute to better postural alignment.

How can Zero Balancing help you?

Zero Balancing can help relieve body aches and pain, release restrictions in movement, and provide lasting relief from emotional distress to improve overall quality of life.

Zero Balancing can also be helpful with specific goals such as relief from back pain, improving concentration or sleep, releasing unwanted stress, eliminating old behavior patterns, or boosting well-being.

There is no credible evidence that Zero Balancing can clear blocks in the body's energy flow, which is misleading pseudoscientific language, or that it can help with issues such as pain, movement restrictions, trouble sleeping, stress, or general health.

**The Advertiser, Suzy Hawes, said in part:** I view this complaint as a useful opportunity to improve the language on my website for potential clients and others who may be interested in Zero Balancing. I take my work very seriously and am mindful of my obligation to provide the best and clearest information to the public.

I have unpublished my website and am working on a re-write which will address the issues pointed out in the complaint.

**The relevant provisions were Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code - Principle 1, Principle 2, Rule 1(b), Rule 2(b);**

**The Chair noted** the Complainant's concern the advertisement made unsubstantiated health claims about the benefits of Zero Balancing which could be misleading.

The Chair acknowledged the Advertiser had removed website after receiving the complaint, while they worked on addressing language which could be in breach of the Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code.

Given the Advertiser's co-operative engagement with the process and the self-regulatory action taken in removing the advertisement, 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 removed**

#### **APPEAL INFORMATION**

According to the procedures of the Advertising Standards Complaints Board, all decisions are able to be appealed by any party to the complaint. Information on our Appeal process is on our website [www.asa.co.nz](http://www.asa.co.nz). Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 days of receipt of this decision.