NIMH Comments on Public Health England Report

Wednesday 6 August, 2014

Laura Stannard, President of the National Institute of Medical Herbalists, has commented on research on antibiotics prescribing by Public Health England and University College London, published in the Journal of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy yesterday.

She said: “GPs are under enormous pressure to prescribe antibiotics for minor or inappropriate conditions, and the report indicates that antibiotics are sometimes used as a placebo.

“NIMH would like to reiterate the previous advice given to the medical professions that antimicrobial plant medicines have a good track record in helping with illnesses such as simple coughs and colds, viral sore throats and uncomplicated cystitis.

“In addition, consultations with medical herbalists are much longer than the average appointment with GPs, thus allowing patients to benefit from the emotional support of talking about their health to a sympathetic medical professional.

“Medical herbalists could lift an enormous burden from the shoulders of GPs, and we urge them to work more closely with NIMH members.”

Ends

Notes for Editors

The National Institute of Medical Herbalists is the UK's leading professional body representing herbal medicine practitioners.

First established as the National Association of Medical Herbalists in 1864, today the National Institute of Medical Herbalists has more than 700 members across the UK and beyond.

The Institute promotes the benefits of herbal medicine and oversees the provision of the best patient care through the work of its members.

NIMH members undergo a lengthy training programme before they can register as qualified medical herbalists. Practitioners train for at least three years and adhere to a strict code of conduct before they can gain MNIMH or FNIMH after their name. Recently qualified practitioners will have taken a BSc in Phytotherapy (herbal medicine). All NIMH-registered herbalists are fully insured, and follow a strict code of conduct.

NIMH-registered medical herbalists are trained in the same diagnostic skills as mainstream doctors but take a more holistic approach to treating illness. Herbalists treat a wide range of acute and chronic conditions and frequently work in collaboration with GPs and consultants to achieve the best combination of treatments for individual patients.

Press Contact:

NIMH can be contacted at:
Clover House, James Court, South Street, Exeter EX1 1EE
Tel: +44 (0) 1392 426022
Fax: +44 (0) 1392 498963
E-mail: info@nimh.org.uk

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