

COREP Corner

The Benefits of BFVEA Practitioner Membership

During the last AGM someone asked what the benefits were of being a BFVEA member. Since clients, friends or you yourself may be asking the same question, here are some thoughts put together by Debbie Sellwood and Jan Stewart. Part of the answer that is least obvious is probably the joy of belonging to a group of like-minded people dedicated to essence therapy. The BFVEA has attracted some of the top practitioners across the world as members and you can meet and make friends with these and other essence therapists personally at the annual Gathering. You are kept up to date with the latest news from the essence world through BFVEA's therapist Facebook page, our monthly e-news update and ESSENCE magazine.

Through our negotiated scheme with Holistic Insurers you can also enjoy a special insurance rate – not only for practice, teaching and attending fairs, etc. but for small scale essence production.

Professional Credibility

On a professional level, BFVEA membership is the easiest way to inform the general public that you not only behave totally professionally in your work but you have proof of doing so by being listed on our register. Clients can check this and know that you are properly trained, insured, bound by a Code of Ethics, Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures and regularly update your knowledge through CPD.

Professional behaviour also demands a personal responsibility to ensure that you are always working safely and legally. Without regular information from the BFVEA and BAFEP on changes in rules and regulations that affect essence therapy this would be very difficult. For example, we have only recently learned that essence practitioners are now being asked to show a food handling certificate if they wish to make up dosage bottles for people at public events.

It only takes one glance at the internet to find significant numbers of ill-informed, unregistered practitioners misleading the public, flouting essence advertising laws and even selling and using illegal products on clients. The BFVEA does contact and advise such people in the interests of 'the greater good'. We also inform them that as one of our members they will have the advantage of a read-through service for their websites and advertising materials which ensures they will always be accurate and legal in their content. The stronger our Membership the more we can effect best practice in essence therapy.....which benefits everyone in the long run.

Education and Research

A further benefit of BFVEA Membership is that you can boost income by becoming an accredited tutor and running one of our courses. The BFVEA will assist you in achieving this by providing help and support during the qualifying and planning stages. Once the course is underway our team will also make occasional visits to verify the content and

quality of your work, monitor student satisfaction and help with any difficulties or disciplinary matters that arise. Finally, since the BFVEA sets the highest standards for essence practitioner training, your students will be able to enter the association directly at Advanced Practitioner Level – an attractive proposition in itself. Obviously, this is a benefit to which only a few will be drawn. But by being a BFVEA member, one is supporting the Association and being instrumental in raising standards generally in essence training.

Another advantage of belonging to the BFVEA is that it provides opportunity for students and members to take part in research. Doing so is instrumental in proving the efficacy of essences and heightening their image, which ultimately benefits you as a practitioner. You will be aware that we have recently had our MYMOP data findings professionally analysed and written up in a report for publication. BFVEA research is also on-going with specialised topics being introduced. For example, we are currently investigating how essences help people who feel overwhelmed by life or events.

Security for the Future

Finally, it is important to accept that membership of a professional body such as the BFVEA is one way you can help raise standards generally for your chosen therapy. The greater the number of members we have in the Association the higher our profile and influence. This is always of great importance. However, in the light of the problems being faced in running and funding the NHS, the Government is currently taking a serious look at 'Integrated Medicine'.¹ In the past, decisions about an individual therapy have been made according to whether good structures of regulation to protect the public are in place; whether an evidence base had been accumulated and research is being carried out; whether there are adequate information sources on the therapy; whether the practitioner training is adequate and what the prospects might be for NHS provision of such treatments.² COREP has already submitted a detailed report on all these issues on your behalf. We emphasised that we believe our members could play an invaluable role in supporting the NHS in the delivery of health, well-being and active self-management; that the public should have the opportunity to choose essence therapy as part of NHS prevention provision and be able to receive advice and treatment from registered essence therapists; and that essence therapy should be an option within personal budgets and as part of care co-ordination.

With this in mind, it is important for BFVEA members to remember that, for £35 a year, they may gain placement on the GRCCT National Register and be awarded a National Registration Number. Since GRCCT is a Government Regulatory Body the public, employers, commissioners, other CAM therapists and colleagues working in allopathic medicine are most likely to use or employ people who are on such a register since they know they have been independently assessed and approved.

As a BFVEA Member you are, therefore, in the best possible place when these changes are decided upon. You can have the confidence that you are part of an Association which will protect your interests as an essence practitioner. In also being part of COREP you know you will be supporting a group that is safeguarding Essence Therapy by constantly

fighting to keep essences on the shelves, allowing you to continue practising. In other words, you can be confident that we are looking both after you and out for you!

References

- [1] *Integrated Health Care: Challenges and Opportunities in a Post Brexit* House of Lords Select Committee enquiry, April 2017, report pending.
- [2] Select Committee on Science and Technology (21st November, 2000) *Sixth Report: Complementary and Alternative Medicine*; Summary, para 1.
www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld199900/ldselect/ldsctech/123/12302.htm

Jan and Debbie