

## **Statutory Regulation Announced by UK Government**

The National Institute of Medical Herbalists (NIMH) warmly welcomed the Government's announcement of the statutory regulation of herbal and traditional medicine practitioners under the Health Professions Council (HPC) announced on Wednesday 16th February. Statutory regulation will ensure the continued supply of herbal medicines to practitioners in compliance with new EU regulations.

Statutory regulation of herbalists has had unequivocal backing from the House of Lords' Science and Technology Committee as well as two Department of Health Committees. It has been the subject of two public consultations, the last attracting over 6000 responses – by far the majority of which favoured such regulation.

Statutory regulation of this sector will enable regulated herbal practitioners to deliver high quality herbal treatment in conjunction with other health care professionals. The legislation will support safe and professional practice so that the thousands of patients who consult herbalists every year can be assured about the standards of training and practice of the practitioners they see.

Desiree Shelley, President of NIMH said "The Government is to be congratulated on making the right decision to bring in statutory regulation for all those prescribing herbal medicines. Ministers have clearly recognised that this legislation is for patients' benefit. The National Institute of Medical Herbalists looks forward to working with the Department of Health and Health Professions Council to implement this as soon as possible."

Judy Patterson would like to offer sincere thanks to all her patients, past patients, friends, relatives and contacts who responded to her request for support during the public consultation phase of the campaign for Statutory Regulation last year. All participants can feel proud to have helped to keep our valuable herbal medicine traditions alive in Great Britain and allow people access to herbs in a time of increasing EU regulation on natural medicines.