

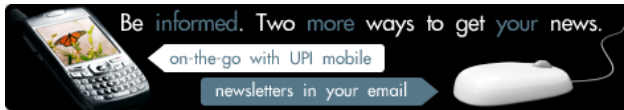
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Britain to govern alternative medicine

Published: Jan. 5, 2008 at 2:39 PM

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LONDON, Jan. 5 (UPI) -- A new council backed by the prince of Wales will regulate British practitioners of aromatherapy, homeopathy and other alternative therapies.

The Natural Healthcare Council will set minimum standards to ensure therapists are qualified and investigate patient complaints about incompetent practitioners, The Times of London reported Saturday.

Britons lay out roughly \$260 million a year on alternative therapies with spending estimated to reach more than \$400 million annually within four years.

Other practices to be monitored by the Council include reflexology, massage, nutrition, shiatsu, reiki, naturopathy, yoga and cranial osteopathy.

Research polls suggest about 68 percent of the British population believes such therapies are as helpful as conventional treatments but there long has been concern over the lack of regulation, the newspaper said.

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