

For Immediate Release

22nd October 2011

Public at Risk from Unprofessional Massage Therapists

New Zealand Massage Therapy Awareness Week (1st to 7th November 2011) is highlighting the risk to the public from the fact that anyone can set up in business as a massage therapist, with no training or experience. Therefore for safe, professional treatment they would be advised to choose a Massage New Zealand Registered Massage Therapist.

“Many people already choose massage therapy to treat conditions from headaches to back-pain to occupational overuse, while others take advantage of the stress reduction benefits of massage.” says Marianne Macdonald, Executive Officer of Massage New Zealand (MNZ), “They would be shocked to learn that they may be in the hands of someone who doesn’t know how to give a safe and effective massage treatment.” She adds, “The behaviour of some cowboy “therapists” has led to a number convictions for sexual misconduct, while others have injured their massage clients.”¹

During Massage Therapy Awareness Week, MNZ members will be offering the chance to experience a treatment with a massage professional, at half the usual cost. Other members will be organising talks or offering short massage “taster” sessions in venues around the country.

Massage New Zealand, the association for professional massage therapists, holds a list of Registered members that can be accessed at www.massagenewzealand.org.nz/find-a-therapist/²

For more information or if you would like to interview the Executive Officer of MNZ or would like to be put in touch with a local contact therapist, please email admin@massagenewzealand.org.nz or phone 0800 367 669 or 021 0232 5558.

Additional Notes:

1 Public Risk

There are numerous examples of people being injured or treated inappropriately by non-members of Massage New Zealand, for example: TV's Target programme secretly monitored four people offering massage and got an independent review by an expert consultant. Two were randomly picked MNZ therapists, who came through with positive reports. Of the other two, who were non-members, one was doing dangerous high-velocity manipulation (only legally allowable by physiotherapists, osteopaths and chiropractors), while the other performed un-solicited breast massage.

2 Massage New Zealand Registered Therapists

- Are qualified to a minimum of Certificate of Therapeutic Massage level, while higher levels hold Diploma or Degree qualifications
- Are required to carry out continuing on-going professional development
- Must abide by a strict Code of Ethics and display a current practising certificate
- Have a current first aid certificate
- Must be of good character, i.e. no convictions related to massage.

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