



**Report of the Fitness to Practise Committee  
following an Inquiry held pursuant to Part 8  
of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007**

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| <b>Registered Medical Practitioner:</b>           | Dr. Tamas Bakonyi   |
| <b>Registration Number:</b>                       | 254815  |
| <b>Registered Address:</b>                        | Hibernia Balscott<br>Hazelhatch<br>Celbridge<br>Co. Kildare   |
| <b>Date of Inquiry:</b>                           | 30 <sup>th</sup> & 31 <sup>st</sup> January, 2012   |
| <b>Members of Inquiry Committee:</b>              | Mr. Brendan Broderick (Chair)<br>Dr. Mary Henry<br>Mr. Stephen Kealy                                  |
| <b>Legal Assessor:</b>                            | Mr. Seamus Woulfe S.C.  |
| <b>Appearances -<br/>For the Chief Executive:</b> | Mr. JP Mc Dowell of Mc Dowell Purcell Solicitors.<br>Ms. Aoiffe Moran of Mc Dowell Purcell Solicitors |
| <b>For the Practitioner:</b>                      | Mr. Simon Mills B.L instructed by Ms. Aisling Malone of<br>Matheson Ormsby Prentice Solicitors        |

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**Findings of the Committee:**

**Allegation 1:**

That Dr. Bakonyi caused, instigated, sanctioned or participated in one or more of the following:

- a. an advertisement in the Liffey Champion on or around 25 July 2009 and/or
- b. one or more articles which appeared on the website [www.saltcave.ie](http://www.saltcave.ie) on or around 01 September 2009 and/or
- c. an article in the Irish Times on or around 15 December 2009 and/or
- d. an article in the Liffey Champion on or around 05 February 2011 and/or
- e. an advertisement in the Liffey Champion on or around 26 February 2011
- f. a radio programme aired on RTE on or around 09 June 2010

in circumstances where one or more of the above:

- a. contained one or more false and/or misleading claims and/or

- b. raised unrealistic public expectations and/or
- c. did not include information about the risk of neglecting, reducing or abandoning proven treatments and/or

Having regard to the evidence adduced, the Committee found that :

**Allegation 1(a) was proven as to fact.**

Reason: The statement "Just by using a 100% natural therapy which is safe and proven?". Although this is expressed in question form, it amounted to a false and misleading claim in substance, having regard to the terms of the advertisement and the evidence of Professor Lane which established this beyond a reasonable doubt.

Allegation 1(a) did amount to poor professional performance.

Reason: The evidence of Professor Lane established this beyond a reasonable doubt.

**Allegation 1(b) was proven as to fact.**

Reason: The Committee was satisfied that several of the statements contained on the website amounted to false and misleading claims, raised unrealistic public expectations, and did not include information about the risk of neglecting, reducing or abandoning proven treatments. The Committee was satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt, having regard to the website material itself, and the evidence of Professor Lane.

Allegation 1(b) did amount to poor professional performance.

Reason: The evidence of Professor Lane established this beyond a reasonable doubt.

**Allegation 1(c) was proven as to fact.**

Reason: The statement "one session in the salt cave normalises the immunoregulation of the chest", constituted a misleading claim beyond a reasonable doubt, having regard to the evidence of Prof. Lane.

Allegation 1(c) did amount to poor professional performance.

Reason: The evidence of Professor Lane established this beyond a reasonable doubt.

**Allegation 1(d) was not proven as to fact.**

**Allegation 1(e) was not proven as to fact.**

**Allegation 1(f) was not proven as to fact.**

**Allegation 2:**

That Dr. Bakonyi offered and/or provided (or arranged for the offering and/or provision of) salt cave climatherapy treatment to one or more patients when:

- a. that treatment did not have any or any adequate evidential basis and/or had not been validated by conventional standards and/or
- b. he had not made it clear to one or more of the patients that this treatment did not have any or any adequate evidential basis and/or had not been validated by conventional standards and/or
- c. he knew or ought to have know that these patients would not derive any or any significant benefit and/or
- d. he failed to emphasise to one or more of the patients that they should continue with their conventional treatments and/or medications and/or

**Allegation 2(a) was proven as to fact.**

Reason: The Committee was satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the treatment was offered and provided to one or more patients, but it did not have any adequate evidential basis and had not been validated by conventional standards, having regard to the evidence of Prof. Lane.

Allegation 2(a) did amount to poor professional performance.

Reason: The evidence of Professor Lane established this beyond a reasonable doubt.

**Allegation 2(b) was not proven as to fact.**

**Allegation 2(c) was not proven as to fact.**

**Allegation 2(d) was withdrawn.**

Braden Brodeur

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**Chairperson**

3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2012

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**Date**