

Statement on the GCC's prosecution policies in respect of the misuse of the title "Chiropractor" and the treatment of animals by Chiropractors

A. Misuse of the title "Chiropractor"

The GCC will take all necessary action up to, and including, taking a criminal prosecution against any person claiming to be a Chiropractor who is not registered with the GCC or is otherwise acting in breach of Section 32 of the Chiropractors Act 1994.

B. Treatment of animals by Chiropractors

The GCC has received legal advice confirming that the 1994 Act is "designed to cover human patients". The entire regulatory scheme of that Act is devoted only to human patients and not animals. The latter come under the Veterinary legislation.

The GCC's policy on the treatment of animals by Chiropractors was first published in 2003 and remains unchanged. That policy specifically draws the attention of practitioners to the Veterinary Surgeons' Act 1966 and the Exemption Order made under that Act.

The Exemption Order states that, "a person who is not a Veterinary Surgeon may provide manipulative therapy to an animal provided the animal has been seen by a Veterinary Surgeon who has diagnosed the condition and decided that the condition should be treated by manual therapy under his/her direction".

The GCC's position is as follows:

- a) Within the UK, the practice of Chiropractic includes the evaluation of the health status of the patient, the formulation of a working diagnosis, and, where appropriate, referral to another health care professional.
- b) Under the Veterinary Surgeons' Act only a Veterinary Surgeon can perform these functions in respect of an animal. Accordingly, within the UK there is no such thing as 'Animal Chiropractor', although a Chiropractor may apply manual therapies to an animal under the direction of a Veterinary Surgeon in accordance with the exemption specified.

If anyone has a concern that a person has treated an animal otherwise than in accordance with the Veterinary Surgeons' Act and the Exemption Order, they should refer that matter to the police or their local Trading Standards office.

C. Use of the title "Animal Chiropractor"

The GCC will not initiate a criminal prosecution under section 32 of the Chiropractors Act 1994 with regard to use of the title "Animal Chiropractor" (or any similar use of the title "Chiropractor" prefixed by a word that clearly refers to the diagnosis or treatment of animals) by any GCC registrant.

Should anyone other than a GCC registrant use such a title and offer to diagnose and/or treat human patients (or imply that they are entitled to do so, or allow others to say/imply so), the GCC will consider taking action against them.