

Vancouver Sun: Friday, Oct. 30: Restore day programs for mental health

Check if health providers are regulated

Re: Chinese herbs mixed with medications can be hazardous, Oct. 15

The B.C. Health Regulators' society urges the public to check that your health care professional is licensed to practise in B.C. by a regulatory college before booking an appointment. Alternative health care is a multi-billion dollar industry, and you should learn about your consumer and legal rights.

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, 70 per cent of all Canadians regularly use complementary and alternative health care therapies and it acknowledges a range of services that include, but are not limited to, aboriginal healing, chiropractic, naturopathy, reiki, acupuncture, massage, reflexology and yoga. Furthermore, natural and non-prescription health products such as vitamins and minerals, herbal remedies, homeopathic medicines, traditional Chinese medicines and probiotics are acknowledged and regulated by Health Canada.

The BC Health Regulators' mandate is to protect the public, so you can expect qualified, ethical and safe care from regulated health care providers. It represents more than 20 regulatory colleges governed by the Health Professions Act and the Social Workers Act. These colleges handle setting and enforcing the standards of their professions.

Registered health professionals, offering complementary and alternative services and advice, can be effective. For a list of Colleges that regulate traditional and alternative health professionals visit bchealthregulators.ca.

CYNTHIA JOHANSEN

Chair of the BC Health Regulators and Registrar/CEO of the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia

<http://www.vancouversun.com/health/Friday+Restore+programs+mental+health/11478485/story.html>