

14 September 2010

Dear Mr Grant

Further to my emails of 2 September 2010, I write now to respond in full to your letter dated 27 August and your email of 30 August. I will deal first with your email, since it is a request contained therein that has caused this slight delay in my response.

Your email drew attention to a website that contained reference to a 120 page dossier entitled *The Vertebral Subluxation Complex – The History, Science, Evolution and Current Quantum Thinking on a Chiropractic Tenet*, which was stated to have been presented to the Council at a meeting held on 17 August 2010. You requested a copy of the dossier.

The dossier was commissioned by the Alliance of UK Chiropractors, which has been formed by three of the four UK chiropractic professional associations. A copy was provided to the GCC shortly before the meeting on 17 August between Council members and representatives of all four associations. Subsequently one of the authors of the dossier notified all participants in the meeting that

- the dossier is copyright
- it should not be copied in part or whole to anyone not present at the meeting
- it will soon be available from the Alliance for a nominal fee.

I checked with the author, in his capacity as a member of the Alliance, whether the dossier will be provided on payment of the fee to everyone who requests it. The response was as follows

*“Although each request will be dealt with on merit, at present the document is only to be available to members of the Alliance.”*

In these circumstances I am seeking written advice from the Office of the Information Commissioner as to the appropriate course of action for the GCC in relation to your request. I will contact you again as soon as I have received that advice.

In response to the remainder of your email, I confirm that

- the changes to the GCC’s guidance on the chiropractic vertebral subluxation complex (VSC) were not based on the contents of the dossier
- the Council has not discussed the dossier, either during or after the meeting with the professional associations, and has no view on it.

Your letter of 27 August requested an explanation and further details on what influenced the Council's decision to remove the phrase "*and health concerns*" from its guidance on the VSC.

The general matters that Council considered were

- a request from all four professional associations for Council to review the guidance
- the relatively widespread use by chiropractors of 'subluxation' as a term on its own and the need to provide as much clarity as possible for the general public

Several chiropractic members had in mind in particular the *NHS Clinical Knowledge Summary on low back pain (without radiculopathy)*, which states that it is caused by disturbance of function.

Council considered whether to replace the words "*and health concerns*" with "*and specific conditions*" but this was considered unnecessary as "*disease*" would include specific conditions.