



The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing St  
London  
SW1A 2AA

7<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

I represent the Association of Reflexologists (AoR), the foremost Professional Association for highly qualified reflexologists. Our members are reflexologists who work both privately and within the NHS, and are a strong part of the integrated healthcare agenda. Clients rely on reflexology for their physical and mental health and wellbeing and this is of great importance to them in these times of extreme stress and anxiety.

- **Reflexology as part of Healthcare:**

- Reflexology is a complementary therapy as defined by the House of Lords Science and Technology Select committee (2000) as one that is used alongside healthcare.
- Reflexology used in a high proportion of cancer units (Corner 2009).
- Our members are exempt from requiring a special license under the Greater London Boroughs licensing scheme specifically because they are health related.
- For those people who rely on us for their physical and mental health and wellbeing reflexology is completely essential. This reliance often reduces the burden on the NHS and therefore is far more essential than any of the other sectors already allowed to return.
- When we asked for client feedback about return to work, we received a huge response from those who rely on reflexology as a vital part of their own healthcare.

- **Highly qualified and professional:**

- Members of the AoR hold an Ofqual regulated qualification and are fully insured.
- Reflexology is included under voluntary regulation of the Complementary and Natural Health Council, which is regulated by the Professional Standards Authority.
- Members are required to do continuing professional development.

- **Covid-19 Secure:**

- Reflexology is mainly carried out on the feet, with a semi-supine client, placing the therapist far more than 1m away from the high risk zone of the head.
- We produced Covid-19 secure guidelines that are industry specific to our members since mid-May; these are over and above those specified by the Government in their Covid-19 Secure return to work guidelines issued on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- We require a risk assessment to be completed before every appointment and strongly recommend facial coverings to be worn.
- Our therapists and their clients are fully responsible and would not put the greater society at risk, unlike some of the recent exhibitions of stupidity.

We recognise that in the big scheme of things we are minor players but we have watched in horror as our sector has been decimated both by Covid-19 and by your actions.

You told close proximity workers to stop work – we understood and wholly complied.



We were appalled that many of our members, who do not, at the best of times, make a decent living, received either little or no financial support at all. Few grants were available to sole traders that primarily comprise this sector.

We were all frankly bemused when hairdressers who are in much closer physical contact than reflexologists were allowed back to work.

We have seen with disgust how a few misogynistic representatives smirked and laughed in Parliament about the plight of female lead industries run primarily by women for women.

We consoled our members who, as constituents, received the same cut and paste letter from their MP's deriding their work as non-essential.

We have seen our Government wrongly place our professional health therapy in the same groups as massage parlours and strip clubs.

We have also learnt how those industries that shout the loudest get heard – so now we are shouting. **We now both request and demand to be heard.**

As well-trained and professional reflexologists, we are safe to return to business and strongly request that you review the clinical risk immediately. We would be extremely open to collaborate with any Government industry taskforce as sector representatives.

We do recognise that not all reflexologists are trained to the same level as our members, and so if you still do not believe the sector as a whole can reopen, then at least work with us to get our professional members back to work.

We await an urgent response.

Yours sincerely,

Chief Executive Association of Reflexologists  
For and on behalf of the Association of Reflexologists

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Attachment: Association of Reflexologists Covid-19 Secure Hygiene Guidelines.