

**The Bowen Forum**  
**Executive Report**

**Grant Period April 2005 to March 2006**

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## **1. Executive Summary**

### **Progress**

The Forum has had an exciting and productive year, meeting the majority of the milestones identified in the grant application. The Forum's regular meetings, chaired by the Independent Chair have identified tasks to be completed and monitored the progress of the work throughout the year. The main achievements have been:

- The constitution has been written and agreed.
- The subgroups working on National Occupational Standards should complete the task on schedule in May 2006.
- The education subgroup has been set up, and is in the process of identifying training providers and inviting them to work with the Forum as affiliate members.
- The Forum website has been developed and is now fully operational.

### **Changes to the project**

Following attendance at PFIH workshops for the presentation of Professor Julie Stone's report into the options for VSR, the Forum Committee believes that Bowen could be most effectively regulated through a federal structure. This change in focus has resulted in the award of additional funding to facilitate a consultation on the proposed federal structure. Project management training provided by PFIH has proved beneficial in planning the consultation process as a specific project.

### **Challenges**

The main challenges identified have been those regarding effective communication strategies, resource management and the identification of realistic processes that are sustainable once the grant comes to an end. The Forum is committed to transparent working and plans to continue to promote open, honest communication strategies to ensure strong relationships with all working partners to help address the challenges outlined above.

### **Main targets for the next twelve months**

- To manage the consultation with Bowen practitioners regarding the development of a federal structure of VSR. Details are included in section 5.
- To recruit additional committee members and volunteers for subgroups;
- To begin work on preparing a core curriculum based upon the National Occupational Standards;
- To agree the criteria for affiliate membership of the Forum;
- To establish how the Forum works with multi-disciplinary associations.

## 2. Progress during the twelve month period

	Milestone	Target Date
<b>Legal:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree and sign Constitution</li> </ul>	<b>Oct 2005</b>

### *Action:*

The Constitution has been agreed and signed.

The committee are currently considering amending this to include Associations that are multi-modality as Full Members. The Forum is liaising with Embody's Complementary Therapy Association (CThA), as they have Bowen practitioners as members. The committee want to include CThA in their work for two reasons:

1. The Forum has a policy of inclusion for all practitioners of Bowen, and wants to maintain links with them;
2. Increasing the number of committee members will add diversity and experience to the Forum and extend the distribution of work.

The criteria for Affiliate membership are still not clearly defined and the committee are discussing these.

<b>Finance:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw up Business Plan</li> <li>• Calculate and invoice 2006 subscriptions for Member Associations</li> <li>• Produce 2004 accounts for AGM</li> </ul>	<b>Sept 2005</b> <b>Sept 2005</b>  <b>Oct 2005</b>
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### *Action:*

A budget has been drawn up for 2006, and the Business Plan will be produced following the outcome of the consultation.

The 2006 subscriptions have been calculated, they were approved at the AGM, and the Associations will be invoiced within the next few weeks. It was agreed at the AGM to set the fees at £5 per head for practitioners members (both full and associate), and that this would be charged to each Member Association.

The 2004 accounts were presented and approved at the AGM.

<b>Recruitment:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit extra volunteers and Committee Members, e.g. NOS team; Educational Facilitator</li> <li>• Establish sub-Committees</li> </ul>	<b>Oct 2005</b>  <b>Oct 2005</b>
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### *Action:*

Extra volunteers have joined the Committee, but there has also been a more rapid turnover than in previous years. This process has impacted on the Forum by slowing

down progress. The Committee have highlighted key areas that need addressing in order to maintain progress:

1. Volunteers need clear outlines of the commitment they are making and feel confident that they can either meet that commitment or raise issues of not being able to meet any commitment with other committee members so that the workload can be continued.
2. Committee members should be supportive of the Voluntary Self Regulation process for Bowen.
3. Committee members should not have a financial interest in any training organisation.

An education group has been established (see under Education and Training).

<b>NOS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree composition of the working party of 8-10</li> <li>• Working party starts to meet</li> <li>• NOS agreed</li> </ul>	<b>Sept 2005</b> <b>Sept 2005</b> <b>May 2006</b>
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***Action:***

The NOS team has been established and is working on the NOS document. The consultation period ended on 14 April 2006, and the anticipated completion date is in June 2006.

<b>AGM:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold first AGM of The Bowen Forum, with a workshop/ seminar format.</li> </ul>	<b>Nov 2005</b>
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***Action:***

The AGM was combined with the Forum Launch on 26 November 2005 and workshops to enable communication with practitioners. All Bowen professionals were welcome to attend and to contribute throughout the day.

The Launch enabled the Committee to pass on current information on the regulation process and introduce the Independent Chair (Jenny Gordon) and PFIH (Jean Nestor). Tom Lane from Skills for Health was invited to present information on the NOS process but he was unable to attend. The Committee presented this information to the best of their knowledge.

The workshops were designed to raise concerns or questions that anyone had. It was clear from these that there is still confusion with regards regulation – especially the difference between Statutory Regulation and Voluntary Self Regulation (VSR). To clarify this the Forum has developed its web-site to include links to relevant sites explaining these processes.

At the end of the Launch and AGM, it was made clear that the Forum Committee’s preferred option would be to pursue VSR by joining other CAM therapies in a federal body.

Practitioners attending, whether or not they are currently members of a professional Association, were offered the option of inclusion on a mailing list to maintain open communication with them.

The Committee were pleased to note that everyone attending the Launch seemed to be in favour of VSR, and several volunteers expressed an interest in helping with the regulation process. However, doubts were expressed about whether VSR could be achieved in the allotted timescale, and at an acceptable cost to therapists.

<b>Education and training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an Education sub-Committee</li> </ul>	<b>Sept 2005</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and contact all training organisations offering courses in Bowen, and invite them to work with us as Affiliate Members of the Forum.</li> </ul>	<b>Oct 2005</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrange first meeting to identify areas of concern and challenges for the different training providers.</li> </ul>	<b>Jan 2006</b>

**Action:**

The Education sub-group is being established with the following aims:

- To formulate a list of all training establishments that offer Bowen related courses.
- To contact these establishments, to keep them up-dated with the regulation process, and to encourage them to pass this information on to students.
- To set up a working party to establish a core curriculum for practitioner training and CPD standards.

A facilitator for this sub-group has been recruited, and the sub-group has started to meet. The Forum is keen to begin work on education as this will be a key aspect of regulation. Once the NOS document has been finalised, work on a core curriculum will begin. With the list of training establishments produced the Forum plan to recruit relevant expertise from this list and to devise a core curriculum.

<b>Research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint Research officer/sub-Committee</li> </ul>	<b>Sept 2005</b>
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**Action:**

The Committee has identified some volunteers who would be interested in being involved, but a sub-Committee has not yet been established.

<b>Publicity:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buy extra web-pages</li> </ul>	<b>Sept 2005</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send out a quarterly Newsletter to all Members, as an insert to the Member Associations' own newsletters.</li> </ul>	<b>Sept 2005</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce a hand-out on the regulatory environment and work of the Forum to be given to all new students.</li> </ul>	<b>Sept 2005</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Web-site fully operational – launch at AGM</li> </ul>	<b>Nov 2005</b>

***Action:***

Extra web pages are now in use, with links to other relevant sites. Practitioners are encouraged to use this to stay up-dated.

Currently on the web-site are:

- Contact details for Forum and other relevant establishments;
- Links to other relevant information and organisations;
- Links to draft NOS documents. This section is inviting feed-back and giving information on how to make use of the consultation period;
- AGM, Launch and workshop minutes;
- Newsletters;
- Information on the regulation process. It is intended that some diagrams will be put on the website at the time of the Consultation on a federal body, to assist Bowen therapists to understand the process;
- E-mail link for questions/queries and inclusion on mailing list. User feedback is encouraged.

The Forum produces and sends out a quarterly newsletter, which is included in the Association newsletters and sent by e-mail to all on the mailing list. The Committee is aware that the regulation process is happening very fast at present and that quarterly newsletters are not going to communicate quickly enough. An extra meeting has been held in April to address this and to develop an action plan.

A handout with information aimed at current students is planned, and this is part of the education sub-group's remit, to liaise with training associations and to ensure that consistent information is given to all new students.

### **3. Changes to the Project**

The main change to the project during the period relates to the proposed federal structure for complementary therapies, which was recommended by Professor Julie Stone in her report. The Committee of the Bowen Forum believes that a federal structure is in the best interests of the general public, and also of Bowen therapists, because of the relatively small number of therapists. A federal body should have better name recognition, it should be able to negotiate more effectively with statutory regulators, insurance companies and consumer organisations, and it should cater better for multi-disciplinary practitioners. In addition, economies of scale achievable by a federal regulator should mean that the cost of regulation for individual therapists would be lower.

The need for consultation on a federal body has resulted in a delay to the project while the consultation document is prepared.

## **4. Challenges**

### **a) Communication**

The aim of the Forum is to communicate the process of VSR to as many Bowen therapists as possible. The challenges are that many of those who are members of associations do not have or have not provided details of current email addresses. Postal communication is more time consuming and incurs increased costs when posting documents for information and consultation. Communication with Bowen therapists who are not currently members of an association currently relies on the effective advertising of our website and the good will of training schools either providing the Forum with contact details of students who have completed training or mailing /emailing information directly. There is a possibility that a number of Bowen therapists may not be included in the process of VSR because we are not able to contact them.

Plans to meet the challenges of effective communication include closer liaison with the training schools; reminders through Associations for members to provide regularly updated contact details including where possible email addresses; the development of a database for therapists who are not currently members of an association through information of Forum website. Additional forms of advertising at conferences will be considered. There may still be a challenge in convincing some practitioners that VSR is a good idea and that the Bowen Forum levy represents value for money.

### **b) Financial Resources**

The aim of the Forum is to manage resources effectively by keeping costs reasonable whilst being realistic as to the costs incurred during the VSR process. The Forum is committed to developing its ability to be self sustaining so that the work of VSR can continue once the PFIH grant finishes. Currently the levy paid by the associations contributes to the work of the Forum. In order to meet future financial challenges, the Forum plans to have regular dialogue with the associations and the training schools to agree on the fairest and the most realistic ways of funding in the future.

The Forum recognizes the importance of meeting the reasonable expenses of those volunteers who undertake work as part of VSR process.

### **c) Manpower/Time**

The Forum recognises the enormous contribution of those who have been involved in the VSR process to date. The challenge is to continue to stimulate and motivate Bowen therapists to become involved. We are aware that some who volunteered their services at the Launch have not yet been called upon, but the subgroups necessary to complete VSR will be set up as and when specific tasks are required. This is to ensure that volunteers have legitimate work or projects to undertake and feel that their time is being spent productively. It is also important to recognise that most volunteers have competing commitments and the time that they can devote may vary. This may impact on the amount of work that can be completed within agreed timescales. Plans to communicate the work that has been achieved and to ask for additional help when necessary will continue through the associations and the website.

## 5. Targets for the next twelve months

<p><b>Bowen Forum Milestones 2006-7</b></p>
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	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
<b>Consultation:</b>	To consult with members regarding a federal structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To prepare for consultation</li> <li>• To notify members through e-mails, mailshots and information posted on the website.</li> <li>• To manage the consultation process</li> <li>• To prepare a response from The Bowen Forum</li> </ul>	May 2006 May 2006  August 2006 August 2006
<b>Legal:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To agree how we work with multi-disciplinary associations, such as CThA.</li> <li>• To agree criteria for Affiliate membership of The Bowen Forum.</li> </ul>	May 2006  August 2006
<b>Finance:</b>	To set up a deposit account.	May 2006
<b>Recruitment:</b>	To recruit extra Committee members	June 2006
<b>NOS:</b>	To agree National Occupational Standards for Bowen.	June 2006
<b>AGM:</b>	To organise an event which therapists can attend, and where they can share their views on the VSR process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To select the date and book the venue</li> <li>• To prepare workshops</li> </ul>	April 2006 Sept 2006
<b>Education and training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To prepare a database of all training establishments.</li> <li>• To invite all to be associate members of The Bowen Forum.</li> <li>• To standardise information that is given to students concerning regulation.</li> <li>• To start to develop a core curriculum for Bowen training, based upon the National Occupational Standards.</li> </ul>	Sept 2006 Sept 2006  Oct 2006  Mar 2007
<b>Research</b>	To set up a research sub-committee.	Sept 2006

<b>Publicity:</b>	To continue to develop the website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote the consultation.</li> <li>• To include diagrams of the proposed regulatory structure.</li> </ul>	June 2006 June 2006

Our main target for the next year concerns the consultation with Bowen practitioners regarding the development of a federal structure of VSR. Details on this project are set out in the next section.

The other key targets relate to the work of the Education and Training and the Research sub-groups, and we aim to recruit additional committee members and volunteers for the subgroups. The development of an education/training provider database is fundamental to the agreement of a core curriculum for Bowen training which will impact on the potential use of grand-parenting schemes following regulation. The research subgroup will start to establish a database of completed and current Bowen research and will work with other therapies to develop a research resource to demystify the research process. This will help to motivate and guide those Bowen practitioners who may wish to be involved in research projects.

Jenny Gordon will continue to work as the independent chair, to attend and contribute to the PFIH Chairs Meetings and to represent the Bowen Forum at other meetings or functions as required.

## **5. Consultation on the proposals for a federal structure**

The Bowen Forum has been given an additional grant by PFIH towards the additional costs of consulting with Bowen therapists on a federal regulatory body. The overall objective is to ensure a representative response to the consultation document from as many Bowen practitioners in the UK as possible. The consultation project will be managed by Forum committee member Janet Barry, who is being provided with two days of training on project management. These skills will be put to use in managing the consultation project.

It is intended to split the consultation project into four separate stages:

### **i) Preparation**

This will include planning how to circulate the consultation document, developing an area of the website dedicated to the consultation process, and preparing a mail shot to all Bowen therapists giving details of the consultation process. The professional associations and training establishments will also be asked to help with publicising the consultation.

### **ii) Launch of the consultation**

This will involve informing as many Bowen Therapists as possible of the consultation, through e-mail and post, and explaining to them the ways in which they can respond. Links to the documents will be put on the Bowen Forum website

### **iii) Management of the consultation process**

This will include answering questions through the website and by telephone and monitoring the comments on the discussion board on the website. The Forum Committee will make presentations or be available to answer questions at the BTER EGM on 21 May, and at the BAUK AGM on 4 June, and will make themselves available to address Regional Interest Groups either in person or by conference call. This stage will also include sending out regular reminders of the end of the consultation process, and we intend to encourage people to respond by entering the names of all respondees into a raffle for two free CPD days.

### **iv) Preparation of the Forum's response**

This will involve collating all responses and comments received into a single response from The Bowen Forum. Finally, we will review the effectiveness of the consultation by assessing the number and the level of detail of the responses.

## 6. Accounts

The accounts for the twelve months ended 31 December 2005 are attached to this report, and are prepared on the accruals basis.

The income for the period comprised membership subscriptions of £1,518, together with £3,409 of the £4,545 grant from the Prince's Foundation for Integrated Health (PFIH). The remaining £1,136 of the grant is included in the balance sheet as deferred income, since it relates to 2006. Membership subscriptions are charged to the professional associations who are full members of The Bowen Forum, based on the budget for the year. In 2005, the associations were charged £2 per therapist member, and in 2006, this will be £5.

The Grant received from PFIH was £4,545, and covered the year to 31 March 2006. The Forum incurred very little expenditure up until the end of July 2005, when it heard that it had been accepted onto PFIH's regulation programme. At the same time, Skills for Health announced that it would be working with the Forum in establishing National Occupational Standards for Bowen. In the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006, the expenditure by the Forum has been:

Honorarium for Independent chair (£3,000 p.a.)	£2,350
Travel expenses for NOS working party	£473
Travel expenses for Committees	£702
Website costs	£172
Subscriptions	£75
Accountancy	£118
AGM costs	£108
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	£3,998

Most of this expenditure has been incurred in the eight months from 1 August 2005.

Expenses are kept low, because the newsletter and associated updates are either sent electronically, or they are posted out by the professional associations. Expenses will be higher in 2006, with more sub-committee meetings, and the consultation on the federal structure, but we have received an additional £850 grant from PFIH, which will help to cover the additional expenses for the consultation.

Signed:

Position: Treasurer

Date: