

# AMT Media Release

## July 3, 2015

### AMT calls for regulatory reform in light of David Wang rape conviction

The Association of Massage Therapists (AMT) is calling on the Federal Government to protect health consumers by strengthening massage therapy regulation, including recognising the AMT Code of Practice in statute and protecting the Massage Therapist title.

The call comes following a story in the Sydney Morning Herald ('Massage therapist Qing Cai 'David' Wang taken into custody over rape of patient', 26/6/15) which underscores an urgent need for stricter regulations to avoid convicted sex offenders being able to continue practising massage therapy.

AMT President Annette Cassar said: "This case highlights the urgent need for regulatory reform for massage therapy practitioners in Australia."

"Currently, there is no uniform, national regulatory system for the practice of massage therapy in Australia. The massage therapy industry remains largely self-regulated."

In April this year, Federal and State and Territory Health Ministers met in Sydney at the COAG Health Council to discuss the final report for A National Code of Conduct for health care workers, which will set standards of conduct and practice for all unregistered health care workers, including massage therapists.

However, AMT Secretary, Rebecca Barnett said that the terms of the proposed National Code of Conduct are too broad to provide adequate protection to members of the public seeking the services of massage therapists.

"As well as introducing a national code of conduct for unregistered health practitioners, the current self-regulatory mechanisms in place for massage therapists should be strengthened in the interests of public health and safety," Ms Barnett said.

"To be a member of AMT, a therapist must hold appropriate insurances and first aid certification, undertake ongoing professional development, and abide by the AMT Code of Practice and AMT Code of Ethics."

To better protect public safety, AMT advocates for the strengthening of these self-regulatory mechanisms through the establishment of a uniform national framework for credentialing massage therapists; protection of the title Massage Therapist and barriers to entry; recognition of the AMT Massage Therapy Code of Practice in statute; and establishment of a register of qualified Massage Therapists under the Australian Health Practitioner regulation agency website.

You can read AMT's position statement on Regulation of the Massage Therapy Industry here: <http://www.amt.org.au/downloads/position-statements/AMT-Position-Statement-Regulation.pdf>

AMT is the oldest national, not-for-profit association representing more than 2000 qualified Massage Therapists and Massage Therapy Students in Australia.

Local accredited massage therapists can be sourced through AMT's online massage directory: <http://www.amt.org.au/massage-and-you/search-by-postcode.html>



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