

Barbara Beacham abstract

Research Matters – Celebrating the Past: Embracing Future Development

Bowen Therapy was established in Australia in the 1960s by Tom Bowen. Since that time, it has grown impressively as a specialty, becoming a valuable complementary addition to many people's health care management; both nationally and internationally.

The endorsement of Bowen therapy based largely on information founded on anecdotal successes continues, however this is no longer enough. The future professionalism and growth of the discipline is being critically challenged by the lack of adequate scientifically rigorous evidence, both in terms of the profession's ability to demonstrate scientifically how Bowen Therapy works and equally important the safety and efficacy of the techniques.

Building a scientifically robust evidence base takes time. It requires a research-savvy practitioner culture and long-term commitment and effort underpinned by adequate investment and engagement in research infrastructure.

The recently negotiated Bowen Therapists Federation of Australia (BTFA) research capacity development partnership with the Australian Research Centre for Complementary and Integrative Medicine (ARCCIM) at the University of Technology Sydney signals a vital step towards accessing research infrastructure, developing research savvy practitioners and ultimately developing the evidence base, and professionalism, for the Bowen discipline.

This presentation outlines the interrelated elements of the ARCCIM-BTFA research capacity development partnership that are available to BTFA members and practitioners. It highlights how looking to, and celebrating, earlier knowledges and developments in Bowen therapy provides a crucial platform for future research development activity. It emphasises the value of previous work whilst promoting the exciting opportunities available to every BTFA member and practitioner to contribute to shaping the future of their profession by embracing and engaging in future research development activity.