

S1W-25424 - Sylvia Jackson (Stirling) (Lab) (Date Lodged Friday, April 26, 2002): To ask the Scottish Executive what role alternative and complementary medicine have within the NHS.

Answered by Malcolm Chisholm (Friday, May 10, 2002): The Executive believes that complementary or alternative therapies may offer relief to some people suffering from a wide variety of conditions. There is no legislative bar to prevent practitioners of such therapies from offering their services, subject only to some general restrictions, such as those on prescribing and supplying medicines and giving injections. A GP or hospital clinician may refer a patient for alternative treatment, but would require to be satisfied of the value of the treatment and the competence of the practitioner, and would remain responsible for the patient's medical care. It is also open to NHS boards to provide complementary or alternative therapies.