Market Report
A Snapshot of your Market Sector

Alternative & Complimentary Therapy
This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the Alternative & Complementary Therapy industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/businessplan), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in September 2019. If you find the information contained in this document useful, tell us about it! Send us feedback here; we will use your comments to help improve our service.

What do I need to know about the Alternative & Complimentary Therapy market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

♦ Signalling strong interest in living well, a large share of adults deems their habits to be healthy in terms of managing a range of different elements of health and wellbeing, namely: alcohol consumption (64%), mental wellbeing (60%), diet (57%), weight (49%), and fitness (43%). Yet, aside from alcohol consumption, significantly fewer consumers rate their habits as being very healthy. However, highlighting that leading a holistically healthy lifestyle can be challenging, only 20% of adults deem their habits to be healthy across all five elements of healthy lifestyles. (Mintel, Managing a Healthy Lifestyle UK, November 2018).

♦ Overweight individuals are more likely to suffer from chronic joint pain, increasing demand for physiotherapy services. Those with high BMIs are often refused surgery, due to the high risks associated with general anaesthesia, and so often turn to alternative forms of medical care. Public health campaigns have urged people to embrace healthier lifestyles as this can prevent declining health. Growing health awareness and fear of complications such as Type 2 diabetes and cancerous growths have led to a rise in demand for the services of dietitians in particular. (IBISWorld, Allied Health-Care Services in the UK, December 2018).

♦ In the 2013 Wellness Tourism Economy inaugural study, GWI defined wellness tourism as travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one’s personal wellbeing and measured its global size for the first time. Fast-forward five years, wellness tourism is now recognized as a significant and fast-growing tourism segment. Globally, wellness tourism has expanded from $563.2 billion in 2015 to $639.4 billion in 2017. The sector’s 6.5% annual growth rate from 2015-2017 is more than double the 3.2% growth rate for general tourism. Travelers made 830 million wellness trips in 2017, which is 139 million more than in 2015. (Global Wellness Economy Monitor, October 2018, tinyurl.com).

♦ There are a number of industry bodies for this industry including The General Regulatory Council for Complementary Therapies, Complementary & Natural Healthcare Council, National Council for Osteopathic Research and British Homeopathic Association.
Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on 0300 013 4753 or email info@bgateway.com.

♦ **Mintel – Managing a Healthy Lifestyle** *(November 2018).* Consumers at a healthy weight (37%) remain far outnumbered by those who are classified as overweight or obese (61%). However, challengingly this is reversed when it comes to consumers’ own perceptions. Just 24% of consumers consider their weight management habits to be unhealthy, compared to half who deem these to be healthy (see Consumers’ Perceptions of the Healthiness of their Habits). The clear mismatch between consumers’ perceptions and the stark reality presents a huge barrier in terms of coaxing them towards a healthy weight.

♦ **IBISWorld – Allied Health-Care Services in the UK** *(December 2018).* Like many other health-care services, allied health care has directly benefited from the expansion and ageing of the population. Furthermore, rising health consciousness and greater enthusiasm for preventative health care have supported industry expansion, particularly for dietary counselling services and physiotherapy.

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

♦ **College of Medicine, Complementary medicine roundup, December 2018.** The College of Medicine have put together evidence and pieces of research carried out by healthcare organisations and medical research establishments discussing the effectiveness, and cost- effectiveness of complementary and alternative medicine as a contributor to integrative medicine and healthcare. (tinyurl.com)

♦ **NHS, Complementary and alternative medicine.** The NHS has produced a guide to complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), including information on finding a practitioner, professional associations and accredited registers for CAMs and questions to ask before starting treatment.

♦ **Mental Health Foundation, Stressed nation: 74% of UK ‘overwhelmed or unable to cope’ at some point in the past year,** *May 2018.* This article highlights the level of stress that UK adults feel. You can also access a number of publications by the Mental Health Foundation on the website. (tinyurl.com)

♦ **Gov.UK, Apply for a traditional herbal registration, September 2016.** Guidance on applying for a traditional herbal registration (THR) to market a herbal medicine (remedy) in the UK. (tinyurl.com)

♦ **The Independent, Top 10 Wellbeing Trends of 2019 so far, from CBD to indoor rowing classes, April 2019.** From brain-boosting nutrition and CBD to digital detoxes, the world of wellness is showing no signs of slowing when it comes to new innovations, making 2019 the year of #selfcare – a hashtag that’s clocked up more than 13m posts on Instagram. With that in mind, here’s our round up the top 10 wellbeing trends of 2019 so far. (tinyurl.com)

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How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway’s online guide to Competitor Analysis explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they’re doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

♦ General business directories such as Yell, Thomson Local or Google Maps
♦ Trade specialists like EuroPages (European directory), The Wholesaler or Free Index
♦ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as Kompass

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members’ directory; find your local Chamber on the Scottish Chambers website.

Once you’ve identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

♦ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
♦ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company’s website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company’s activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company’s partners or suppliers
♦ Search for information on limited UK companies via the Companies House website
♦ Gain an insight into your competitor’s performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing info@bgateway.com or by calling 0300 013 4753
What about suppliers?

*Choosing and Managing Suppliers* can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please info@bgateway.com or by calling 0300 013 4753.

Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway’s guides on *Retaining and Grow Your Customer Base* will help you to identify who your customers are, how to use this information to sell more effectively and how to actively compete in your marketplace.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can’t find what you’re looking for from these website, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- Access the latest population estimates from the National Records of Scotland (NRS). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the Census Area Profiles. Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- Understanding Scottish Places has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- Scottish Government Statistics provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- The Scottish Household Survey provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.
How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

**Accountancy**
- Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland’s (ICAS) “Find a Chartered Accountant” tool

**Funding**
- Practical information on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

**Insurance**
- Business insurance guide

**Legal Help**
- Gov.uk “Licence Finder” tool
- Law Society of Scotland’s “Find a Solicitor” tool

**Pricing**
- Business Companion Pricing & payment guide.

Please note: the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

**Promotion**
- BG guides to Marketing

**Training**
- Skills Development Scotland’s My World of Work
- Funding for training
- Small Business Bonus Scheme (Scotland)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on 0300 013 4753 to find out what is available in your area.

We hope you find this Market Report useful and we’d love to hear your feedback [here](#).

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

**Last updated:** September 2019  
**Updated by:** Liesel