

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1254389/Distance-healer-faces-court-internet-claim-hes-miracle-worker-cure-cancer.html>

'Psychic healer' who claims he can cure cancer by laying his hands on patients is facing jail

By [DAILY MAIL REPORTER](#)

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[Enlarge](#)



Distance healer Adrian Pengelly: He faces a court battle with Trading Standards for violating the Cancer Act 1939, which states that it is illegal to advertise offers to treat cancer

A self-proclaimed healer is being prosecuted over testimonials on his website claiming he can cure cancer.

Adrian Pengelly, 43, says he is a 'visionary healer, energy worker, teacher and psychic' whose powers have made him 'world famous for treating people with cancer'.

His website is laden with endorsements attesting to his apparently supernatural abilities, many claiming he is a 'miracle worker'.

But he is being taken to court by trading standards officers under the Cancer Act of 1939, which bans advertising offers to treat cancer and carries the threat of a three-month jail sentence.

Pengelly, who featured in a damning episode of the BBC's Watchdog in September, says he is 'proud' of the charges.

Speaking from his home in Leominster, Herefordshire, he said: 'If that's the charge, that on my website there are testimonials from people whose cancer has vanished after I've treated them, then I'm proud to say I did that dastardly deed.'

He says he found 17 years ago he could 'stimulate a healing response' in patients using the laying-on of his hands and has since treated 'tens of thousands' of people and animals, with 13,700 waiting for his services at up to £30 a session.

He also claims he can cure people around the world using 'distance healing'.

Pengelly, who is due before Hereford magistrates this month, says he has never seen his website, which is run by his patients.

He said: 'The people on my website have done it for free, out of the goodness of their hearts.'

'I'm just a healer. I can do things most healers only dream about.'

His 'patients' are numerous. One, from IL in Shropshire, states: 'I was diagnosed August/08 with a 4cm breast cancer tumour. I had weekly healing treatments with Adrian until I was operated on four weeks later.'

'My surgeons report was - the tumour when removed was 2.5cm, with no cancer spread!! I think this result speaks for itself!!'

[Enlarge](#)



Nordon Hall near Leominster, the home of healer Adrian James Pengelly

Another, from MG in Herefordshire, says: 'In April 2007, I was diagnosed with cancer of the liver and lungs, probably secondaries of a bowel cancer. At that time, the oncologist told me I had four months to live (Six at the outside).

'I have been a patient of Adrian Pengelly since June 2007. The combination of his undoubted gifts, his high professional standards and the atmosphere of calm and harmony which he has created in his consulting room have, I am convinced, contributed greatly to my survival.'

In 2004, supermarket giant Tesco was taken to court under the Cancer Act after running a promotion with Cancer Research UK encouraging people to eat healthily in a bid to prevent cancer. Those convicted of under the Cancer Act face fines or up to three months in prison.

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29 March 2010

The Process

<http://www.spanglefish.com/adrianpengellyexposed/news.asp?intent=viewstory&newsid=25448>

More gems from Mr Pengelly's site as it appeared in April 2009.

"Want to know more about how healing works? Pay attention, here comes the science bit!"

In fact all we get is an all-too-familiar mix of New Age babble and poorly-understood borrowings from real science:

"At a cellular level our DNA holds the secrets to life, and within that there is the ability and potential to heal ourselves of whatever condition we are unlucky enough to acquire in life."

This is sheer, unadulterated nonsense. Mr Pengelly clearly doesn't understand DNA, but he knows how to impress other people who don't understand DNA.

"If we choose to see healing as a religious or spiritual activity, or somewhere in-between, we can still accept that a process happens and a physical change occurs which can be measured and understood."

Yes, processes happen and measurable physical changes occur in *physical* healing. Religious/spiritual healing is characterized by its LACK of any measurable result not attributable to the placebo effect, self-limiting conditions, the continued use of mainstream medical drugs or other treatments or the fact that the patient wasn't really ill to begin with.

"The one thing that is certain is that there is not enough scientific research into healing, and much of what has been done has been designed to disprove it."

More nonsense. So your pet brand of New Age/alternative healing doesn't stand up to scientific scrutiny? Blame it on the medical establishment, Big Pharma or negative vibrations emanating from those horrid, horrid sceptical scientists. The simple fact is that "healing" of the kind peddled by Adrian Pengelly cannot be scientifically verified because it is rooted in fantasy, not reality.

"Adrian's work can best be understood in terms of manipulating energy."

Oh dear, here we go again...more cargo cult science, and further proof that no-one should leave school without a firm grasp of basic science and critical thinking. Gentle reader, if you understand the meaning of the word "energy" in its scientific sense prepare to be amazed by the following statements:

"An acupuncturist will use needles to move energy, and Adrian is able to do this using his hands which often generate an intense heat. This heat is probably caused by the movement or transfer of energy and in the past it has occasionally left physical marks on patients' skin through their clothes."

A picture of the marks caused by this hitherto unknown form of energy would have been worth a thousand words, if not a Nobel Prize. I simply cannot understand why Mr Pengelly didn't provide one.

"Physicists who performed a series of experiments on Adrian some years ago discovered the electromagnetic field over his hands was several thousand percent stronger than that normally registered on most individuals."

(I find it rather funny that many of the people likely to believe this nonsense about electromagnetic fields curing illness are also likely to believe that the very same electromagnetic fields are responsible for causing cancer via mobile phone masts).

Which physicists were these? Mr Pengelly has been strangely shy about naming names so far, but just when I was beginning to think the worst he comes up with the goods:

"Another theory suggested by science writer and physicist Michael Holt, looks at the angle of the bond between the oxygen and hydrogen molecules in water held within the body. Michael considered that Adrian may be able to change the angle of the bond thereby changing the properties of the fluid within the body. A further theory holds that the energy used by Adrian may supercharge enzyme activity creating a healing effect where none previously existed."

I was unable to trace a science writer and physicist called Michael Holt, which wasn't surprising as he turned out to be a retired teacher of maths and geometry who worked in London schools in the 60s and 70s. I attempted to contact him through his publisher but they were unable to help me, and I think it's reasonable to assume that he is now dead. Mr Holt was also a prolific writer of puzzle books for children whose scholarly works include:

"The Big Book of Puzzles" series

"The Pan Pocket Puzzler"

"The Dr Who Quiz Book of Dinosaurs"

By no stretch of the imagination can Mr Holt be described as either a physicist or a science writer. He did however live near Mr Pengelly on the Worcestershire/Herefordshire border, so he came in handy when Mr Pengelly needed a name to help blind his readers with science (well, pseudo-science).

Anyway, back to Mr Pengelly's healing methods:

"Healing can be expressed in a similar way to an electromagnetic field spreading outwards from Adrian and enveloping anyone and anything within a certain distance. People or animals in the vicinity of a healing session often receive healing despite not being in physical contact with Adrian... Further evidence that healing acts rather like a magnetic field is seen when mechanical and electrical equipment is affected by Adrian. It is very common for clocks or watches in the vicinity of a healing session to stop working. This will include both mechanical and electrical time pieces. Doubtless, experiments could be performed to measure the extent and strength of the field. This may then give further clues as to the nature and origins of the healing ability."

This is interesting. Would Mr Pengelly be willing to submit to properly conducted tests? His claim about stopped clocks and watches is identical to that made by the long-discredited Uri

Geller, but it should be easy enough to prove or disprove. Unfortunately I suspect that the electromagnetic field radiating from Mr Pengelly would be rather difficult to measure since it exists nowhere but in his imagination and those of his patients.

Rather alarmingly Mr Pengelly adds that:

"Whatever the actual physical process involved, Adrian's healing is a very powerful tool and can be very dramatic for the recipient. The physical sensations encountered during the process have been likened to 'healing with a baseball bat'! There is certainly nothing doubtful about it. Tingling, intense heat, electric shocks and light headedness are very common reactions. It's not unusual for people to be unable to drive afterwards, or to sleep for days after a session."

Dare I suggest that the lucky recipients of Mr Pengelly's healing suffer these symptoms because he *tell*s them what to expect?

"And what do the doctors say about all this? You can often ask them yourself when you meet them at the clinics. Doctors want to be well too, so treating the medical profession is a normal part of Adrian's work."

Why on earth is it necessary to attend Mr Pengelly's clinics to ask the opinion of the doctors who apparently flock to them. Surely a few online statements, complete with the doctors' full names and professional qualifications, would be just as effective?

But enough of the process - what about Mr Pengelly's skill at Distance Healing?

"If you live outside of the UK or can't get to any of his clinics, Adrian can still send you distance healing. Powerful and effective and environmentally friendly."

Environmentally friendly, forsooth! Yes, I can't argue with that. Waves of imaginary energy wafting through the atmosphere are unlikely to cause any damage.

"Adrian specialises in sending distance (also known as absent) healing to recipients around the world... It may seem hard to believe that a healer can effect an improvement when he is hundreds or thousands of miles away from a patient, but time and time again the results have been seen to work. This is a great option if you live too far away to come for healing or if the recipient is too ill to travel."

No, it isn't in the least bit hard to believe. Thanks to the power of suggestion anyone inclined to take this mumbo-jumbo seriously is likely to feel better knowing that Mr Pengelly's healing vibrations are heading their way. Yes, I hear you cry, but what about those people who didn't even know they were on the receiving end of his mystic powers?

"In addition, the recipient does not need to know they are receiving healing. The healing will still take place whether or not the recipient is conscious of what is happening."

Again, never underestimate the power of suggestion. I suspect that the patient, having been informed that he or she has been the unwitting recipient of Mr Pengelly's healing, will say something to the effect of "Gosh, I THOUGHT I felt better when I woke up on Friday morning!"

I was touched by Mr Pengelly's ethical concerns:

"However, it may not be fair or ethical to give healing without consent, so you should consider this aspect before asking Adrian to send healing."

Yes, it's so annoying when someone heals you without your express permission. This must be a source of constant confusion, particularly since:

"Adrian does not need to know the name, address, or any details of the person who needs healing."

Still, it's comforting to know that:

"Despite spending many hours sending healing all around the world, Adrian makes no charge for this service. If you have received distance healing you may like to make a donation to a charity of your choice as a gesture of goodwill."

Yes, by all means make a donation to your favourite charity. But since Mr Pengelly is essentially doing nothing more than exploiting the mighty power of suggestion he should hardly expect to be paid for it.

Let's consider another statement about Distance Healing:

"Adrian will typically spend around two hours a day directing his healing consciousness toward recipients and has so far achieved remarkable results, particularly with cancer patients."

Mr Pengelly, I do hope that these cancer patients were still taking prescribed medication and continuing to receive mainstream treatments such as chemotherapy. Wouldn't it be appalling if a purveyor of New Age/alternative treatment insinuated that mainstream cancer therapy could adversely affect the efficiency of his own form of treatment?

More of this later..

<http://www.spanglefish.com/adrianpengellyexposed/news.asp?intent=viewstory&newsid=25448>

<http://www.spanglefish.com/adrianpengellyexposed/news.asp?intent=viewstory&newsid=25445>

Mr Pengelly's website

29 March 2010

Mr Pengelly's Website

Before we enter the Weird World of Adrian Pengelly it's worth noting that the April 2009 version of his website made no secret of its origin:

Copyright © Adrian Pengelly and Bongo WebDesign 2009

Created by Alison Derrick (Bongo WebDesign)

(Alison Derrick is Mr Pengelly's live-in girlfriend. She is also a professional web designer, which explains why his site is a cut above the barely literate and eye-wateringly ugly sites favoured by many New Agers).

This is important, because as his 12/03/10 court appearance approached Mr Pengelly claimed in all seriousness that the site had absolutely nothing to do with him, that he had no control over its content and that he never even read it!

Visitors to the old site were greeted by a startling claim:

"He is famous for his work with both people and animals, and is especially well known for his successful cancer treatments."

"Successful" cancer treatments? I'll say this for Mr Pengelly, he doesn't beat about the bush. Again, I have no idea what he means by being "famous", at least outside a small coterie of New Age believers. I've spoken to many people with much more experience of researching paranormal/alternative beliefs than I have and not one of them had heard of him. Still, it's interesting to know that a totally unqualified person is using his website to advertise cancer treatment.

Now let's take a look at Mr Pengelly's background and healing methods. Apparently he first became aware of his healing skills in his late 20's after visiting a "psychic fair". After healing a friend's migraine his fame spread far and wide by word of mouth, but we are assured that Mr Pengelly didn't go into the healing business for filthy lucre:

"For most of his career Adrian has not taken any payment for his treatment..."

However, he is now a full-time professional healer. His website gives no indication of what he charges but his testimonials give the impression that he is paid on a "whatever you can afford"□ basis; he also offers various courses and workshops, the cost of which isn't specified either.

Readers are told that Mr Pengelly's clinics are held at two venues, Red Hill Farm at Bromyard, Herefordshire, and Oakley Farm, Droitwich, Worcestershire. Patients at Red Hill can also take advantage of the skills of John and Julie Evans, "experts in muscle testing for nutritional deficiencies" - another nonsensical New Age therapy. It's rather worrying to see that at both venues

"...priority is given to children and patients with serious and terminal conditions."

Mr Pengelly's home page continues:

"Adrian is considered by many as the most gifted healer of his generation."

Really? By whom?

"The effectiveness of his work has become known around the world, his reputation spread purely by word of mouth and the belief held in him by thousands of people. He heals by sending healing energy through his hands into a patient's body either directly hands-on, or over thousands of miles using distance healing."

For someone whose healing skills are famous round the world Mr Pengelly had a rather underwhelming internet presence in April 2009, but then again he uses that elusive "healing energy" without which no New Age wonder-worker is properly equipped. With all that energy sloshing about in the atmosphere (I use the word *energy* in a completely non-scientific sense, as does Mr Pengelly) it must be damned hard to work out who is healing who.

"He has been healing since the early 1990's and since that time has worked with tens of thousands of people and animals. The vast majority have been successfully healed often beyond all medical expectation and have seen their lives changed forever."

That's one heck of a claim, and I hope Mr Pengelly is able to provide evidence for this in the form of REAL people with REAL medical records. Unsupported testimonials have absolutely no value as evidence; they are merely anecdotes, and the plural of anecdotes isn't data.

However, before we examine Mr Pengelly's testimonials from cured cancer patients let's have a closer look at how his treatment is supposed to work.

<http://www.spanglefish.com/adrianpengellyexposed/news.asp?intent=viewstory&newsid=25445>

<http://www.spanglefish.com/adrianpengellyexposed/news.asp?intent=viewstory&newsid=25417>

My original articles

27 March 2010

My Original Articles

Between April and June 2009 I wrote a series of articles about Mr Pengelly's claims for another sceptical website (not UKSkeptics). In September Mr Pengelly threatened the webmaster with legal action and they were taken down - not because they were inaccurate but because the webmaster didn't want to run the risk

of getting involved in a frivolous lawsuit. As the distinguished science writer Simon Singh recently discovered, the UK's libel laws are a national disgrace and a crackpot's paradise. Since then I have posted ALL the material from my articles elsewhere on the internet without hearing a peep of complaint from Mr Pengelly or his lawyer.

<http://www.spanglefish.com/adrianpengellyexposed/news.asp?intent=viewstory&newsid=25414>

How It All Began

27 March 2010

How It All Began

Our story begins on 31/04/09 with an interesting forum post on www.ukskeptics.org.uk, which later grew into a lengthy thread:

<http://www.ukskeptics.com/showthread.php/3755-Adrian-Pengelly-Astonishing-claims>

Despite a long-standing interest in the paranormal and related subjects I had never heard of "energy healer" Adrian Pengelly, and neither had anyone else on the forum. When I visited his website I was absolutely staggered by what I found. How on earth had Mr Pengelly's illegal offers to treat cancer not come to the attention of his local Trading Standards office? The simple answer to this, and one of the reasons why people like Mr Pengelly are laughing all the way to the bank, is that *all* Trading Standards offices are overworked and understaffed. They simply cannot employ people to trawl through dodgy websites in search of potentially actionable material.

What about the media? Surely there must be plenty of journalists on the lookout for stories like this? Alas, no. The New Age/Alternative medicine industry is VERY big business. Look at the ads section of almost any newspaper or magazine and ask yourself how much money the publication makes by promoting irrational and potentially dangerous claptrap. Editors know that millions of people buy into this feelgood fantasy world and are therefore unwilling to challenge their readers' delicate belief systems.

I resolved to bring the bizarre content of Mr Pengelly's website before a wider audience in three ways: by reporting him to Hereford Trading Standards, suggesting that BBC's "Watchdog" do a feature on him, and by writing a series of online articles.

And thereby hangs a tale...

<http://www.spanglefish.com/adrianpengellyexposed/news.asp?intent=viewstory&newsid=25451>

Mr Pengelly and the Cancer Act of 1939

29 March 2010

Mr Pengelly and the Cancer Act of 1939

The FAQ section of his original website made it clear that Mr Pengelly knew he was skating on thin ice regarding this piece of legislation. His solution to the problem was simple - misrepresent the terms of the Act. The following statements were deleted from the website shortly before Mr Pengelly was due to appear in court on 12/03/09:

"I have heard that Adrian can heal cancer. How can that be true?"

Adrian has become world famous for his cancer treatment. Rightly, there are laws in place in many countries that prevent people from making claims regarding the cure of cancer. However, Adrian has had enormous success in treating cancer and hundreds of people have benefited from his work. The vast majority have passed Adrian's name onto others and his reputation has spread around the world. People will only recommend something if they are happy with it, so it is fair to say that he can provide a great deal of relief to those suffering from this condition."

Firstly, notice that it isn't at all clear from the wording of this reply that the UK is one of those "many countries". Secondly and much more seriously, the whole point of the Cancer Act of 1939 is not to prevent people from claiming the ability to cure cancer, **it is to stop medically unqualified people such as Adrian Pengelly from offering to treat cancer**. Claims to cure cancer, which can take the form of outright statements or testimonials from (alleged) patients, are made as part of a sales pitch to cancer patients. Back in the golden age of quack medicine *anyone* could take out a small ad in a newspaper or magazine and lure cancer patients into their care; today they use the internet, where it's relatively easy to slip under the radar of Trading Standards offices (until some "disturbed person" reports them, of course!)

From the Cancer Act:

"No person shall take any part in the publication of any advertisement containing an offer to treat any person for cancer, or to prescribe any remedy therefor, or to give any advice in connection with the treatment thereof."

Read the entire Act here:

<http://www.statutelaw.gov.uk/content.aspx?LegType=All+Primary&PageNumber=77&NavFrom=2&parentActiveTextDocId=1085680&ActiveTextDocId=1085680&filesize=26534>[/quote]

It's very short and simple - so simple, indeed, it's hard to imagine anyone misunderstanding it.

Now, on to the cancer-related testimonials which have now been removed from Mr Pengelly's site!

<http://www.spanglefish.com/adrianpengellyexposed/news.asp?intent=viewstory&newsid=25612>

Mr Pengelly Plays the Persecution Card

02 April 2010

Mr Pengelly Plays the Persecution Card

From Mr Pengelly's new, bowdlerized website:

"It appears I am the first healer to ever be prosecuted for 'taking part in an advertisement offering to treat any person for cancer'..."

Prosecutions under the Cancer Act of 1939 are probably rare, and there's an obvious reason for this. Before Trading Standards can take anyone to court they have to issue verbal and written warnings, which in the vast majority of cases result in the actionable material being removed immediately and no legal action being taken. Mr Pengelly chose to ignore these warnings and had to suffer the consequences.

I personally know of three medically unqualified people who offered to treat cancer patients and claimed to have "successfully treated" the illness: "psychic surgeon" Gary Mannion, Wiltshire-based "healer" Nina Knowland and an Edinburgh woman calling herself "Robin Reiki". I reported all three to their local Trading Standards offices, and in every case they altered their websites after a warning.

<http://www.spanglefish.com/adrianpengellyexposed/news.asp?intent=viewstory&newsid=2559>

02 April 2010

Mr Pengelly's Imaginary Degree

One of the few hits turned up by a Google search of Mr Pengelly's name in April 2009 was the website of a French animal welfare group, SAG Coalition.

http://www.sag-coalition.org/INTERVIEW_684066.html

Tucked away amongst his claims to have cured cancer in animals and waffle about living in France between March 1988 and September 1989 - a period he actually spent living with his wife and child at Lye, near Stourbridge - is yet another lie...

"I graduated from Birmingham University."

I contacted the Alumni Department at Birmingham University, and guess what - they had no record of his graduation.

<http://www.spanglefish.com/adrianpengellyexposed/news.asp?intent=viewstory&newsid=25592>