

On the Mainstream Internationalisation of Chinese Medicine Education

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【Abstract】

After more than half a century of integrating Chinese medicine and western medicine, Chinese healthcare system has been benefited from the process. Behind this success, China enjoys an educational system that integrate both systems of medicine as equals in legal status.

Mainstream medical education outside China has not been able to adopt such an integrative approach due to many reasons. This paper is to discuss steps towards such mainstream integration of Chinese medicine education internationally.

【Keywords】

Chinese medicine education, Integration, Mainstream medical education, Accreditation, Standard syllabus, Continued education

It is clear that China's healthcare has benefited positively from integration between Chinese & western medicine. Currently, Chinese medicine education has not gained mainstream acceptance amongst medical schools internationally. As this is an important factor for the integration of Chinese medicine within the mainstream medical practice globally, we need to consider strategically how to promote such a development. Here, I am proposing a few key steps to initiate discussion.

(1) Creating an International Accreditation Board

To internationalise Chinese medicine, an authoritative accreditation board is necessary to assist each country to set its criteria for good practice. At present there are disagreements and we need a reliable authority to assist in the legalization process of Chinese medicine. Local Chinese medicine professional organisations in each country need a peer organisation to accredit the educational standard required for practice and registration. Although conditions are different

in each country, but an authoritative "International Accreditation Board" will provide standard guidelines acceptable for government approval.

(2) Agreeing on an international syllabus and basic educational requirements for practice



Although educational requirements and standard differs from one country to another, we still need to consider guidelines that will ensure basic competence to practice Chinese medicine safely and effectively.

An international syllabus may differ from existing Chinese syllabus that applied within Chinese universities. A consensus has to be reached internationally and then adopted flexibly in each country. The process can be supervised by the "International Accreditation Board" to ensure qualitative adaptation of the international syllabus. Current works on this issue is undertaken by the Education Instruction Committee of the WFCMS in China.

(3) Educating the doctors and healthcare professionals as the first priority

As qualified doctors and healthcare professionals in each country are the key practitioners in medical service, they are naturally the priority



groups to promote Chinese medicine education programme. Their medical training and experience serves as a sound foundation for Chinese medicine training, although system methodology may present a difficult hurdle.

Once they learn the essence of Chinese medicine they can immediately apply it clinically and effectively promote Chinese medicine towards mainstream national practice.

The educational technique and contents emphasis are critical ingredients in integrating holistic syndrome clinical approach with Evidence Based Medicine. The CMIR has gained valuable experience in teaching doctors and healthcare professionals at postgraduate diploma level over the past fifteen years.

(4) Introducing Chinese medicine as part of Mainstream Medical Education

Medical schools of each country are responsible for educating the next generation of doctors. It is therefore important to introduce Chinese medicine as part of their training. This is a key strategical consideration for integrating Chinese medicine within mainstream medical practice.

The CMIR is pioneering this approach.

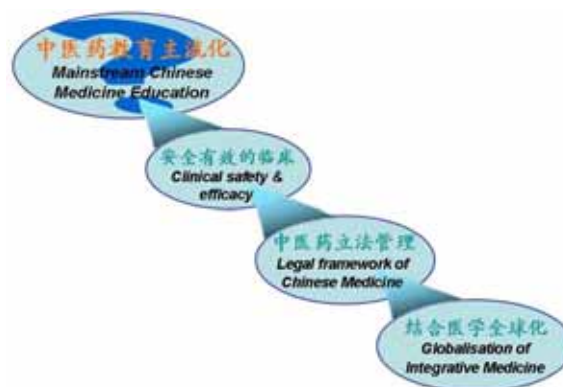
(5) Build a centre of excellence in each country for Chinese Medicine Education and Research

In a hospital setting, the necessary clinical environment will be provided for Chinese medicine education. We need to consider

building a centre of excellence, such as a dedicated hospital for Chinese medicine training and research to ensure sustained development for the internationalisation of Chinese medicine. Besides serving as a training hospital, it can also conduct research projects in collaboration with local institutions. Continued medical education may also be part of its activities.

Conclusion

The above steps are considered in the context of a current global trend in integrative medicine. Legal frameworks are proposed in many countries for Chinese medicine.



Chinese medicine education will be judged by its contents, clinical safety and efficacy. I believe that Chinese medicine with its proven clinical experience and wisdom as a system of medicine, will be an important part of our future global integrative medicine. Education will play a key role in this process.