

Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine launched: building a bridge between traditional and modern medicine

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In 2021, *Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine* (AHM) in English is officially published by Tianjin University of Traditional Chinese Medicine and China Association of Chinese Medicine. AHM is a peer-reviewed, diamond open-access international journal dedicated to publishing high quality research in the field of acupuncture and herbal medicine. The types of publication considered are editorial, review article, original article, guidelines and standards, commentary, short communications, case report, methodology, and letter to the editor. Featured by evidence-based medicine researches, AHM publishes innovative studies on acupuncture and herbal medicine, promotes academic exchanges, and drives the transformation of research achievements to serve the international development of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and establish the frontrunner journal for international communication of traditional medicine.

Since the late 2000s, changes in the disease spectrum have led to significant transformation in medical models and the goals of medicine worldwide. World Health Organization has advocated for universal access to essential medical services for global health benefits and starts the great journey of building a healthy world.

Mainly based on acupuncture and herbal medicine, TCM has a long history and has played an important role in ensuring the prosperity of the nation and safeguarding the health of the Chinese people. Although it is ancient, its concepts are not outdated, such as the concepts of harmony between human beings and the nature, the dynamic balance between *yin* and *yang*, the individualized treatment through syndrome differentiation, and the active preventive medical thought of health maintenance. All of these theories converge with the frontier directions

of modern life science, and exhibit the value of TCM in modern society. The extensive practice has proven that solutions to life sciences and medical problems are entrenched in TCM, emphasizing the worth of its vigorous inheritance and development.

The modernization of TCM has been more than 20 years and has made great progress. A meaningful experience is to maintain the inheritance and promote the innovation, through following the theoretical basis of TCM, introducing and learning from advanced scientific and technological methods which is making the past serve the present. “Stones from other mountains can serve to polish our jade.” The synergistic effect can be realized through complementary advantages.

Since 2020, a sudden COVID-19 epidemic has wreaked havoc around the world, with China bearing the brunt. Chinese people have united in struggling against COVID-19 with the fearless heroism, and forged the great anti-epidemic spirit of “the supremacy of life, the unity of the whole country, the sacrifice of life and death, respect for science, and the sharing of destiny.” In less than three months, we have won a phased victory in the fight against the epidemic.

TCM has participated in the prevention and control of COVID-19 epidemic and played a critical role in all of the stages^[1]. Strict isolation and widespread use of TCM effectively blocked the spread of COVID-19 epidemic, reduced the development from mild to severe, increased the cure rate and reduced the mortality rate. In response to the different outcomes in clinical evaluation studies, the world’s first Core Outcome Set (COS) was developed by Tianjin University of Traditional Chinese Medicine for clinical trials on COVID-19 (COS-COVID), which determined the “rate of mild to severe” as a critical clinical evaluation outcome^[2]. This outcome was recognized and widely used in evaluating the results of clinical trials for TCM, clinical drugs and vaccines. In addition, China has also actively shared its anti-epidemic experience of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine with the world, which has been widely concerned and positively commented by the international community. The combination of the TCM and Western medicine is not only one of the characteristics of China’s COVID-19 response^[3], but also a vivid practice of inheriting the essence of TCM, maintaining the integrity and promoting the innovation.

The pandemic has not only changed the world, but also change the world’s attitude towards TCM. Mainly based on acupuncture and herbal medicine, TCM has been popularized and applied in more than 100 countries

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Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine (2021) 1:1

Received 21 June 2021 / Accepted 28 June 2021

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1097/HM9.000000000000013>

around the world and legalized in health insurance by dozens of countries and regions. A number of high-level papers have been published and high-level education and personnel training have been sustainably performing. *AHM* will hold to evidence-based medicine research and adhere to the directions of “inheriting the essence, maintaining the integrity, and promoting the innovation”, report innovative theories and excellent academic achievements in the field of acupuncture and herbal medicine, and move forward to the international leading journal. We will strive to build a bridge between traditional medicine and modern medicine, promote global communication and cooperation, and contribute to the health and well-being of all mankind!

Conflict of interest statement

Boli Zhang is the Editor-in-Chief of this journal.

Funding

This article was supported by the Action Plan for Excellence of Chinese Science and Technology Journals (Excellence Plan-D-028).

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How to cite this article: Zhang BL. *Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine* launched: building a bridge between traditional and modern medicine. *Acupunct Herb Med* 2021;1(1):1–2. doi: 10.1097/HM9.0000000000000013