



世界针灸学会联合会

**WORLD FEDERATION OF ACUPUNCTURE AND
MOXIBUSTION SOCIETIES (WFAS)**

NGO IN OFFICIAL RELATIONS WITH WHO

SPECIAL CONSULTATIVE STATUS WITH UN ECOSOC

A-LIASON ORGANIZATION OF ISO/TC249

Statement on the Integration of Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine Herbs in the Prevention and Treatment of Infectious Diseases Amidst Rising Antimicrobial Resistance in the WHO European Region 2023-2030

73rd Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe

Agenda item 5 “Roadmap on antimicrobial resistance for the WHO European Region 2023-2030”

As the world grapples with the formidable challenge of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), it is imperative that we explore innovative and holistic approaches to prevent and treat infectious diseases. The rise of AMR poses a significant threat to global public health, necessitating a multifaceted approach that leverages the strengths of various medical traditions. In this statement, we advocate for the inclusion of acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) herbs as valuable adjunctive therapies in the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases.

The contemporary landscape of infectious diseases demands a comprehensive response that extends beyond conventional antibiotics and pharmaceuticals. Acupuncture and TCM have been utilized for thousands of years and offer a wealth of knowledge and therapeutic tools that can contribute to this global effort. We assert that integrating these traditional modalities into mainstream medical practices can enhance the effectiveness of our strategies against infectious diseases and help mitigate the growing AMR crisis.

Understanding the Role of Acupuncture and TCM Herbs:

- **Holistic Healthcare:** Acupuncture and TCM are rooted in the principle of holistic healthcare, focusing on balance and harmony within the body. By addressing the underlying causes of health imbalances and supporting the immune system, these modalities can strengthen an individual's resistance to infectious diseases.
- **Immune Modulation:** Acupuncture has been shown to modulate the immune system, enhancing both innate and adaptive immune responses. Furthermore, TCM herbs have a long history of use in fortifying the body's defense mechanisms. These effects can be especially valuable in preventing and treating infectious diseases.
- **Reduced Reliance on Antibiotics:** Integrating acupuncture and TCM herbs can help reduce the overreliance on antibiotics, a major driver of AMR. By incorporating these therapies, we can decrease the selective pressure on microbes, thereby contributing to the mitigation of AMR.

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- **Management of Symptoms:** TCM herbs and acupuncture can effectively manage the symptoms of infectious diseases, alleviating discomfort and improving the overall well-being of patients. This may help in reducing the inappropriate use of antibiotics to treat symptomatology.
- **Complementary Therapies:** Acupuncture and TCM can complement existing medical practices, providing a more comprehensive and patient-centered approach to infectious disease management.

Research and Collaboration:

To advance the integration of acupuncture and TCM into infectious disease prevention and treatment, it is essential to invest in research, education, and collaboration. We call for:

- **Research Initiatives:** The initiation of rigorous scientific research to further explore the efficacy of acupuncture and TCM herbs in infectious disease management.
- **Education and Training:** The development of educational programs that promote a better understanding of these traditional modalities among healthcare professionals.
- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Encouraging collaboration between Western medicine, acupuncture practitioners, and TCM herbalists to ensure the development of comprehensive, evidence-based treatment protocols.
- **Regulatory Framework:** The establishment of clear regulatory guidelines to ensure the safe and effective practice of acupuncture and TCM in the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases.

Inclusion in Health Policies:

We urge the World Health Organization and its European Committee to consider the following recommendations in the development of policies addressing infectious diseases and AMR:

- **Recognition and Integration:** Acknowledge the value of acupuncture and TCM herbs as integral components of infectious disease prevention and treatment.
- **Multidisciplinary Guidelines:** Develop guidelines that incorporate both traditional and modern medical approaches, fostering a more holistic and effective strategy against infectious diseases.
- **Promotion of Research:** Advocate for increased funding and support for research on acupuncture and TCM's role in infectious disease management.
- **Capacity Building:** Encourage the development of training programs and support systems for healthcare professionals to expand their knowledge of these traditional

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modalities.

The fight against infectious diseases and the challenges posed by AMR require a concerted effort that embraces diverse therapeutic modalities. The integration of acupuncture and TCM herbs in infectious disease prevention and treatment is a vital step towards holistic healthcare, reduction in AMR, and improved patient outcomes. By embracing these traditional practices and nurturing collaboration between various healthcare systems, we can pave the way for a brighter, more sustainable future in global health.

We urge the World Health Organization's European Committee to consider these recommendations and work toward a comprehensive strategy that encompasses the rich heritage of acupuncture and TCM in our collective response to infectious diseases and the global threat of antimicrobial resistance. Together, we can forge a path to a healthier, more resilient world.

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