



**REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC  
BUREAU REGIONAL DU PACIFIQUE OCCIDENTAL**

**REGIONAL COMMITTEE**

WPR/RC58/NGO/13

**Fifty-eighth session  
Jeju, Republic of Korea  
10-14 September 2007**

13 September 2007

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Agenda item 15

**STATEMENT BY DR JAMES FLOWERS  
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AND MOXIBUSTION SOCIETIES (WFAS)**

Chairman, Your Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates:

I am representing the World Federation of Acupuncture and Moxibustion Societies. WFAS endorses the WHO/WPRO strategy on Traditional Medicine.

In WPRO, there has been a lot of work in this area. Dr Seung Hoon Choi of WPRO has done a lot of work in the area of traditional medicine, including acupuncture. Acupuncture, as part of Chinese medicine, is widely used throughout the world as part of primary health care. For example, in Australia, Chinese medicine is a registered profession in the State of Victoria. Acupuncture is also taught at degree level in several universities in Australia. It is also a registered profession in Singapore. This is not to mention the major role that acupuncture has in the health care systems of China, Japan and Korea.

Surveys indicate that the usage of acupuncture and Chinese medicine is growing rapidly. People are voting with their feet.

Since US President Richard Nixon's visit to China in 1971, acupuncture and later Chinese herbal medicine, have grown from the fringe to an alternative to a central part of many people's lives and an integral part of health care systems in many countries, spreading outward from its traditional heartland of China.

During the SARS crisis, WHO played a major role in locking the spread of the virus down. Less reported on in the media, Chinese medicine was used widely during the SARS crisis. Reports of its efficacy during that crisis can be found in WHO documentation.

With the focus of many Member States shifting to noncommunicable diseases, it is the position of WFAS that acupuncture will have a rapidly growing role to play in health care. One of acupuncture's major strengths is its ability to promote wellness. In this sense, acupuncture and Chinese medicine has a major role in prevention of diseases.

If we are concerned about health issues such as obesity, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, etc., acupuncture is already regularly used by millions of people in order to prevent these

conditions from developing. Practitioners of acupuncture traditionally pay a lot of attention to issues such as diet.

To add a personal note, I myself lost twenty-five kilos in weight over six months through a course of acupuncture once every week or two weeks.

Acupuncture is significant in promoting healthy ageing.

Another area of growing popularity is the use of acupuncture in helping drug users through their withdrawals. There are a number of such government-supported programmes around the world, notably in the USA.

A number of Member States pay close attention to the development of acupuncture. WFAS urges Member States to continue to work with WHO/WPRO on developing traditional medicines.

Apart from the issue of efficacy, the savings to governments in financial terms could be immense with the more widespread use of traditional medicines such as acupuncture.

WFAS calls on Member States to:

- Look at ways to increase capacity building in acupuncture.

For example, the Australian Government recently pledged millions of dollars in this area.

- Support university programmes in acupuncture and Chinese medicine.

China and Korea invest heavily in this area. Japan is also strong in this area. Australia is making considerable progress.

- Support the capacity of acupuncture to be used on a larger scale in hospitals. Again, China and Korea invest heavily in this area.

- Looking at reasonable systems of regulation of acupuncture.

This is in the interests of public safety. In the wrong hands, acupuncture can do harm. It is reasonable that the untrained and the incompetent be restricted in practicing on an unsuspecting populace. Governments can play a role in ensuring levels of safe and competent practice.

In summary, WHO/WPRO has done a lot to ensure the safe and efficacious practice of acupuncture and Chinese medicine. This work can help Member States in strategies to implement acupuncture efficiently and in line with the imperative to promote public health. WFAS believes that acupuncture has an important and efficacious role to play in public health.