

AAOM, Acupuncture Alliance Reach "Memorandum of Understanding"

Editorial Staff

The history of acupuncture and Oriental medicine in the United States is one that has been filled, for the most part, with posturing and politicking from groups and individuals who have claimed to have the profession's interests at heart. Recently, however, things seem to have taken a turn for the better, as witnessed by a June meeting between officials of the American Association of Oriental Medicine (AAOM) and the National Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Alliance in Washington, D.C. Some of the best and brightest minds in the profession were in attendance, with Carla Wilson, LAc, Dipl.Ac.; Anne Bailey, MSN, LAc, Dipl.Ac.; Jim Turner, LAc; and Sherman Cohn, Esq., representing the Alliance, and Ian Cyrus, RAc; Robbee Fian, LAc, Dipl.Ac. & CH; and David Molony, LAc, representing the AAOM.

At the meeting, the leaders of the AAOM and the Alliance recognized that while they have their share of differences, they also have the profession's best interests at heart. As a result of that meeting, the organizations drafted a Memorandum of Understanding, a good faith agreement whereby both groups will work together whenever feasible to advance the profession forward.

To accomplish that goal, the AAOM and the Alliance agreed to work together in areas of common interest when possible to avoid potential conflict and cross-purposes. In areas where the organizations disagree, AAOM and the Alliance agreed to keep the lines of communication open through discussion and examination of the issues at hand. Most of this work will be done through committees that report to each organization.

The AAOM and the Alliance also agreed to work together on several vital issues, including ethics; communication; state and national legislation; national regulations; the promotion of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Day; developing bylaws for state associations; student awareness; and the generation of positive media stories.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING Between the AAOM and the Alliance

PREAMBLE: June 16, 2002

The AAOM and the Alliance agree, in good faith, to work together whenever feasible to move the profession ahead. It is also recognized that there are differences between the two organizations in both policy and structure. It is also recognized that each organization is operating from a position of principle and in good faith.

To accomplish these ends, the two organizations will work together in areas of common interest where feasible in an effort to avoid unproductive conflict and cross-purposes. In areas of disagreement, the two organizations will continue to communicate, discuss and examine those disagreements in a collegial manner.

Most of this work will be done through committees of the two organizations. Each committee is responsible to its own president and board.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

1. ETHICS Development of a model code of ethics that, upon the approval of both organizations, will be forwarded to the state regulatory agencies and state associations with a recommendation for adoption.
2. COMMUNICATION The AAOM and the Alliance will communicate with each other through their presidents, their executive directors and their committees on issues that may arise, both of common interest and areas of differences. No public statement will be made about one organization by the other organization, including by its officers, boards and executive directors, without first communicating with the other organization to ascertain the accuracy of facts and context.
3. STATE LEGISLATION
4. NATIONAL LEGISLATION
5. NATIONAL REGULATORY (including herbs) Joint meeting of herbal committees to interact with FDA to make joint recommendations.
6. INTERNATIONAL ACUPUNCTURE DAY Form a joint committee to develop a plan/PR campaign for annual international acupuncture day on October 24.
7. BYLAWS Develop model bylaws for state associations.
8. EXPANDING STUDENT AWARENESS
9. COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS We encourage state association presidents to attend the council of presidents meeting at both national meetings. The chairs of each council of presidents meeting become the co-chairs of the council or presidents.
10. NEWSLETTER Invite the president of each organization to write an article/be interviewed/interview each other in the next organization's issue. Each president has final approval on what is printed.

DECEMBER 2002