

Texas Cancer Center, Chinese Hospital Receive \$263,000 Grant to Study TCM

Editorial Staff

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) has awarded a \$263,000 grant to the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center and the Cancer Hospital at Fudan University in Shanghai, China, for a two-year pilot study to establish an international center to investigate the benefits of traditional Chinese medicine. The grant is the first of its kind to be approved by the NCI, and is one of the first to support the development of an international partnership to study the use of traditional Chinese medicine in the treatment of cancer.

"Traditional Chinese medicine has a remarkable history," commented M.D. Anderson President John Mendelsohn, MD. "By applying Western scientific methodology, we hope this pilot study will open the doors to important discoveries that will result in better treatment and quality of life for cancer patients worldwide."

The study will create the International Center for Traditional Chinese Medicine, comprised of scientists and researchers from both institutions. The center will investigate three aspects of traditional Chinese medicine: herbal and natural treatments that target cancer and cancer-related symptoms; acupuncture and its ability to ease the side-effects of some cancer treatments; and the behavioral effects of *qigong* and other mind-body therapies.

In addition to collaborating on TCM studies, both institutions plan to work together in areas of population-based research, and increase opportunities for educational exchange among faculty members.

"There is much that cancer experts in China and the United States can learn from each other," observed Dr. Lorenzo Cohen, chief of the integrative medicine section at M.D. Anderson and the pilot study's lead investigator. "We hope open communication and a free exchange of scientific ideas will allow Western practitioners to learn about concepts of traditional medicine and expose Chinese practitioners to our approach to clinical research."

Legislative Developments in Michigan

In January, we reported on House Bill 5205, a new acupuncture licensing law being proposed in Michigan. Introduced by Rep. Randy Richardville in October 2003, the bill would, among other things, expand the scope of practice for licensed acupuncturists and create a state board of acupuncture, which would be charged with licensing and regulating practitioners.

On March 16, members of the Michigan Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (MAAOM) showed their support for the bill by providing free acupuncture sessions at the state capitol. A total of 11 acupuncturists delivered treatments to legislative aides and staff members while explaining the importance of the bill to lawmakers.

"It's really educational and tells us about why we need licenses," remarked MAAOM President Deborah Lincoln, Dipl. Ac., adding that without high educational standards, the public might be

exposed to poorly trained acupuncturists. "It's a safety issue to the constituents."

HB 5205 is currently under review by the House Committee on Health Policy. Look for an update on this and other acupuncture-related laws in future issues of *Acupuncture Today*.

Canadian Official Uses Acupuncture to Help Quit Smoking

Almost 12 years ago, Ralph Klein was elected by the citizens of Alberta, Canada to be their premier. Now 61, Mr. Klein has realized the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Three years ago, he admitted to having a serious drinking problem and stopped drinking alcohol. Now, he has turned to acupuncture to help break another unhealthy habit - smoking - which he began doing as a child more than 50 years ago.

"I've really cut down a lot," Klein said in March. "I watch it and I ration it, and I'm going to keep doing it."

Klein told reporters he was encouraged to quit smoking by a friend and co-worker, who also stopped smoking so that he could donate a kidney to a friend. During a typical acupuncture session, he may receive as many as 18 needles inserted into various regions of the body.

"They stick the needles in, four on each leg, four in each arm, one in the ear," he told the *Calgary Herald*.

As a result, Klein's smoking habit has dropped dramatically, from one pack a day to five or six cigarettes per day. He has also encouraged his wife to quit smoking.

"It hasn't completely worked yet, but at least I'm cognizant" of the effects acupuncture can have, Klein said.

References

1. Barrett T. Klein ready to quit smoking. *Calgary Herald* March 10, 2004.
2. Ward J. Klein gets needled on smokes. *Calgary Sun* March 10, 2004.

MAY 2004