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1. How do we turn this situation in a positive for the profession?
2. What else could be on the watch list related to acupuncture?
3. What can each of us do to stay away from potential problems?

4. What do we say or give to patients that discusses the safety of acupuncture needles?

Safety is the fastest growing concern in the medical arena throughout the United States and around the world today. The World Health Organization is working on a new classification for Quality of Care and Patient Safety. Both acupuncture and herbal medicines are being included in this work.

It is important that each individual practitioner look, on a regular basis, at their own offices to see what the patients see. Once a week or at least very regularly, sit in the front section of your own office and look around. Try five sensing the office. How does it look, sound, feel, taste and smell?

Become aware of the laws and regulations in your own state, as well as Federal regulations. Many challenges are facing this profession. Become a part of the ideas and solutions, help out wherever you can.

Is nutrigenomics a new term to you? It is finding the appropriate nutrition and herbs to fit with your genetic pattern. Think about how acupuncture and herbal medicine works. We call it customizing personalized medicine. Each patient is unique, pulses are different and herbs can be mixed to meet individual needs.

There are some issues with structure-function claims. The profession cannot use words about herbs that claim it treats any certain disease or issue. This seems to be because there is not enough research-based evidence. This profession needs more data to demonstrate that we can treat disease. We are way ahead in identifying patterns and creating unique herbal medicines for patients.

Herbal medicine is a very important part of Asian medicine. It is very effective and supports your acupuncture treatments. It is so valuable that hospitals are looking to include it in their treatment resources.

Our responsibility is to educate patients through oral explanations, written material and answering questions during consultations with patients and families. This is called being an amplifier. Historically, we have been mute.

Functional medicine is becoming a very popular "buzz word." Acupuncture is the original functional medicine. Patients across the world are experiencing functional restoration through acupuncture treatments and herbal medicine prescriptions. These are very effective and have no side effects.

Be enthusiastic about your profession and be an amplifier. Make noise. Silence is not golden when it comes to acupuncture and herbal medicine. You are healthcare providers as defined in the Affordable Healthcare Act and this profession is here to stay over the long term.

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