



ACUPUNCTURE & ACUPRESSURE

## The Year to Make Things Happen

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It is hard to believe that the Year of the Ram – 2015 is half over. Time seems to be moving especially fast. This is the year for things to happen for the acupuncture profession.

First, congratulations go to North Dakota and Blake Blowers, L.Ac. for the new licensure law. The rumor mill reports that one person was responsible for organizing a state association and pushing through a law for licensure. Thank you Blake Blowers for your leadership and steadfast commitment to work on this project to see it through to completion. The attainment of licensure for the acupuncturists in North Dakota is one more step in progress for the profession.

### On the Horizon

The landscape of healthcare is changing. Many factors/issues are driving the reforms:

- The rising costs.
- Inconsistent quality.
- Diminishing access.
- Patient safety and quality of care.
- Aging population – 10,000 baby boomers.
- Waste and redundancy.
- Administrative responsibilities.
- An aging population.
- The rise in chronic diseases.



As you look at this list, you will probably come to some of the same conclusions I have. Asian medicine through acupuncture and herbs can help influence many of these factors/issues.

The first step is the completion of states being licensed. North Dakota just did it! One person really can make a difference for the entire profession. We cannot have input unless we first have a seat.

#### New Players

The new national organization, the Academy of Integrated Health and Medicine, held its first meeting last November. It was attended by more than 700 medical doctors looking to integrate. There were five people representing acupuncture. They are looking for 209 Acupuncturists to attend this year. Will you be one of those attending?

What is integrative medicine? There are many reasons for the entrance and emergency of integrative medicine. As defined by the National Center for Complimentary and Integrated Medicine at the National Institute of Health, "Integrated medicine combines mainstream medical therapies and CAM therapies for which there is some high quality scientific evidence of safety and effectiveness."

Integrative medicine is healing-oriented medicine that considers the whole person (body, mind, and spirit) including all aspects of a person's lifestyle. This includes as many CAM and conventional therapies as are appropriate for treating a patient.

The following is a list of guidelines used in integrative medicine:

- It is a partnership between the practitioner and the patient, establishing a therapeutic alliance

to create a healing environment and process.

- It includes the use of both CAM and Western medicine to help the body in its healing process.
- It includes looking at the disease process and considering the numerous factors like the mind, body and emotions to create a new level of health.
- It holds a belief that includes all interventions and realizes that neither conventional or CAM is all right or all wrong.
- It encourages an open mind from both patient and practitioner that the chosen interventions, whether Eastern or Western, or some from both, are based on science, inquiring minds and open to new treatment programs.
- Use of the least invasive intervention at the beginning when appropriate.
- Promoting concepts of better functional outcomes, wellness and prevention, as well as treating diseases.
- The training of practitioners is to be a model for health through leadership, self-development, sharing of information, and the exploration of new treatment protocols that are focused centered on the patient and their involvement in their care.

Many outside groups want the acupuncture profession at the table. Let's take the challenge and join the cause of Integrative Medicine. Remember, this is the year to make things happen!

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