WHO Traditional Medicine
Strategy and Guidelines

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Scope of Presentation

- Definition of Traditional Medicine (TM)
- Use of TM in different countries
- Types of health systems and Integration of TM
- Challenges
- WHO Strategic Directions
- WHO Guidelines
What is Traditional Medicine

WHO defines traditional medicine as including diverse health practices, approaches, knowledge and beliefs incorporating plant, animal, and/or mineral based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises applied singularly or in combination to maintain well-being, as well as to treat, diagnose or prevent illness.
### Commonly used TM/CAM therapies and therapeutic techniques

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chinese medicine</th>
<th>Ayurveda</th>
<th>Unani</th>
<th>Naturopathy</th>
<th>Osteopathy</th>
<th>Homeopathy</th>
<th>Chiropractic</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Herbal medicines</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acupuncture/ acupressure</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>●</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Manual therapies</strong></td>
<td>Tuina^c</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shiatsu^d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual therapies</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hypnosis, healing, meditation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exercises</strong></td>
<td>Qigong^e</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>Relaxation</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- ● — commonly uses this therapy/therapeutic technique
- □ — sometimes uses this therapy/therapeutic technique
- □ — uses therapeutic touch
- ^a — for example, many informal TM systems in Africa and Latin America use herbal medicines.
- ^b — for example, in Thailand, some commonly used TM therapies incorporate acupuncture and acupressure.
- ^c — type of manual therapy used in traditional Chinese medicine.
- ^d — refers to manual therapy of Japanese origin in which pressure is applied with thumbs, palms, etc., to certain points of the body.
- ^e — component of traditional Chinese medicine that combines movement, meditation and regulation of breathing to enhance the flow of vital energy (qi) in the body to improve circulation and enhance immune function.
Types of Health Systems

- Inclusive
- Integrative
- Tolerant
Inclusive System

An inclusive system recognizes TM/CAM, but has not yet fully integrated it into all aspects of health care, be this health care delivery, education and training, or regulation.

Tolerant System

In countries with a tolerant system, the national health care system is based entirely on allopathic medicine, but some TM/CAM practices are tolerated by law.
Incorporation of TM/CAM into National Health Care Systems: Integrative system

- In an integrative system, TM/CAM is officially recognized and incorporated into all areas of health care provision.

- This means that: TM/CAM is included in the:
  - relevant country’s national drug policy; providers and products are registered and regulated;
  - TM/CAM therapies are available at hospitals and clinics (both public and private);
  - treatment with TM/CAM is reimbursed under health insurance;
  - relevant research is undertaken; and education in TM/CAM is available.

- Worldwide, only China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea and Viet Nam can be considered to have attained an integrative system.
Broad Use and Appeal

In many developing and developed countries as often stated in government reports the majority of the population continues to use TM to meet its primary health care needs.
Percentage of Population used CAM Atleast Once

CHALLENGES
National policy and regulatory frameworks

- Lack of official recognition of TM/CAM and TM/CAM providers
- TM/CAM not integrated into national health care systems
- Lack of regulatory and legal mechanisms
- Equitable distribution of benefits of indigenous TM knowledge and products
- Inadequate allocation of resources for TM/CAM development and capacity building
Safety, efficacy and quality

• Lack of research methodology

• Inadequate evidence-base for TM/CAM therapies and products

• Lack of international and national standards for ensuring safety, efficacy and quality control of TM/CAM therapies and products

• Lack of adequate regulation and registration of herbal medicines

• Lack of registration of TM/CAM providers

• Inadequate support for research
ACCESS

• Lack of data measuring access levels and affordability

• Need to identify safe and effective therapies and products

• Lack of official recognition of role of TM/CAM providers

• Lack of cooperation between TM/CAM providers and allopathic practitioners

• Unsustainable use of medicinal plant resources
Rational Use

• Lack of training for TM/CAM providers and on TM/CAM for allopathic practitioners

• Lack of communication between TM/CAM and allopathic practitioners, and between allopathic practitioners and consumers

• Lack of information for public on rational use of TM/CAM
WHO Global Strategic Directions
### WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy: Objectives, Components and Expected Outcomes

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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Expected outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>POLICY:</strong> Integrate TM/CAM with national health care systems, as appropriate, by developing and implementing national TM/CAM policies* and programmes</td>
<td>• Recognition of TM/CAM Help countries to develop national policies and programmes on TM/CAM</td>
<td>• Increased government support for TM/CAM, through comprehensive national policies on TM/CAM</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Protection and preservation of indigenous TM knowledge relating to health Help countries to develop strategies to protect their indigenous TM knowledge</td>
<td>• Relevant TM/CAM integrated into national health care system services</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Increased recording and preservation of indigenous knowledge of TM, including development of digital TM libraries</td>
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* TM/CAM: Traditional Medicine/Complementary and Alternative Medicine
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| SAFETY, EFFICACY AND QUALITY: Promote the safety, efficacy and quality of TM/CAM by expanding the knowledge-base on TM/CAM, and by providing guidance on regulatory and quality assurance standards | Evidence-base for TM/CAM Increase access to and extent of knowledge of the safety, efficacy and quality of TM/CAM, with an emphasis on priority health problems such as malaria and HIV/AIDS | • Increased access to and extent of knowledge of TM/CAM through networking and exchange of accurate information  
• Technical reviews of research on use of TM/CAM for prevention, treatment and management of common diseases and conditions  
• Selective support for clinical research into use of TM/CAM for priority health problems such as malaria and HIV/AIDS, and common diseases |
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| RATIONAL USE: Promote therapeutically sound use of appropriate TM/CAM by providers and consumers | Proper use of TM/CAM by providers Increase capacity of TM/CAM providers to make proper use of TM/CAM products and therapies | • Basic training in commonly used TM/CAM therapies practitioners  
• Basic training in primary health care for TM Practitioners |
|                                                                           | Proper use of TM/CAM by consumers Increase capacity of consumers to make informed decisions about use of TM/CAM products and therapies | • Reliable information for consumers on proper use of TM/CAM therapies  
• Improved communication between allopathic practitioners and their patients concerning use of TM/CAM |
# WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy: Objectives, Components and Expected Outcomes

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| SAFETY, EFFICACY AND QUALITY: Promote the safety, efficacy and quality of TM/CAM by expanding the knowledge-base on TM/CAM, and by providing guidance on regulatory and quality assurance standards | Regulation of herbal medicines Support countries to establish effective regulatory systems for registration and quality assurance of herbal medicines | • National regulation of herbal medicines, including registration, established and implemented  
• Safety monitoring of herbal medicines and other TM/CAM products and therapies |
| | Guidelines on safety, efficacy and quality Develop and support implementation of technical guidelines for ensuring the safety, efficacy and quality control of herbal medicines and other TM/CAM products and therapies | • Technical guidelines and methodology for evaluating safety, efficacy and quality of TM/CAM  
• Criteria for evidence-based data on safety, efficacy and quality of TM/CAM therapies |
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<td>ACCESS: Increase the availability and affordability of TM/CAM, as appropriate, with an emphasis on access for poor populations</td>
<td>Recognition of role of TM/CAM practitioners in health care Promote recognition of role of TM/CAM practitioners in health care by encouraging interaction and dialogue between TM/CAM practitioners and allopathic practitioners</td>
<td>• Criteria and indicators, where possible, to measure cost-effectiveness and equitable access to TM/CAM • Increased provision of appropriate TM/CAM through national health services • Increased number of national organizations of TM/CAM providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of medicinal plants Promote sustainable use and cultivation of medicinal plants</td>
<td>• Guidelines for good agriculture practice in relation to medicinal plants • Sustainable use of medicinal plant resources</td>
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WHO Guidelines
Guidelines for the regulation of herbal medicines in the South-East Asia Region

These guidelines aim to propose to member states a framework for facilitating the regulation of herbal medicines/products used in traditional medicine.

They cover the following issues:

- **Classification of herbal medicines**
- **Minimum requirements for assessment of safety of herbal medicine**
- **Minimum requirements for assessment of the efficacy of herbal medicines**
- **Quality assurance of herbal medicinal products**
- **Pharmacovigilance of herbal medicinal products**
- **Control of advertisements of herbal medicinal products**
More and More Countries are Regulating Herbal Medicines

Quality Control Methods for Medicinal Plant Materials

This manual describes a series of tests for assessing the quality of medicinal plant materials. These tests are designed primarily for use in national drug quality control laboratories in developing countries and complement those described in The International Pharmacopeia.

It pertains to the following:
• Powder fineness and sieve size
• Macroscopic and microscopic properties
• Determination of ash, extractable matter, volatile oils, bitterness value, hemolytic activity, tannins, pesticide residues, radioactive contamination etc.
WHO Guidelines on safety monitoring of herbal medicines in pharmacovigilance systems

Safety of herbal medicine is an important public health issue. The guidelines stresses upon:

• The importance and process of monitoring the safety of herbal medicine within the pharmacovigilance system

• Standard definitions of terms related to pharmacovigilance and safety monitoring of herbal medicine

• Challenges in monitoring the safety of herbal medicine

• Need for good communication for ensuring successful safety monitoring
WHO Guidelines on good agricultural and collection practices (GACP) for medicinal plants

These guidelines are intended to provide technical knowledge on obtaining medicinal plant materials of good quality for the sustainable production of herbal products classified as medicines.

They apply to the following:

• Identification, authentication, cultivation and harvest of medicinal plants

• Good collection practices for medicinal plants

• Common technical aspects of good agricultural practices for medicinal plants in terms of personnel, packaging, storage and transportation.

• Relevant issues of ethical/ legal considerations and research
National Policy on Traditional Medicine and Regulation of Herbal Medicine

There is a lack of common standards and appropriate methods for evaluating traditional medicine to ensure the safety, efficacy and quality control TM/CAM.

In 2001, WHO developed the Global Survey Questionnaire which focused on the following:

- General review of policy and regulation of TM/CAM
- Regulation of herbal medicines
- Countries need for future WHO support and guidance.
General guidelines for methodologies on research and evaluation of traditional medicine

These guidelines have been developed to promote the proper use and development of traditional medicine and relate to specific issues of methodologies for:

- research and evaluation of herbal medicines
- research and evaluation of traditional procedure – based therapies
- Clinical research norms
- Other issues and considerations of ethics, education/training and surveillance systems.
Thank You