



PRESS RELEASE

Cancer and the contribution of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)

A Round Table Meeting of the European Parliament Interest Groups MEPs Against Cancer and MEPs for CAM on the above topic took place on Tuesday 27th March 2012 in the European Parliament.

A European survey has shown that more than a third of cancer patients in Europe use complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), to increase their body's ability to overcome the disease, to enhance their health and well-being, to feel empowered, and to alleviate physical and/or psychological distress.

Emerging evidence from scientific studies suggests that several CAM therapies may address pain, fatigue, and psychological distress and improve quality of life in cancer patients. Because of the growing interest in CAM by patients, academic cancer centres are exploring ways to integrate such care into a conventional cancer treatment system.

Prof. Dr. Dobos, Professor of Internal Medicine and Chair of Complementary and Integrative Medicine at the University of Duisburg-Essen Germany and Dr Madeleen Winkler, an experienced anthroposophic medical doctor and general practitioner from Gouda Netherlands, on behalf of Prof. Dr. Harald Matthes of Charité University of Berlin Germany made presentations outlining the role of CAM in prevention and treatment of cancer, and the benefits of integrating both approaches. Ms Heidi Brorson, a representative from the Norwegian Cancer Society and cancer league made a presentation on how they work with and advise cancer patients about using CAM as part of their cancer treatment plans.

MEPs Sirpa Pietikäinen of MEPs for CAM and Alojz Peterle representing MAC, MEPs Against Cancer, co-chaired the meeting. They concluded the meeting with a call to the European Commission and the European Parliament to actively support the greater integration of CAM into the healthcare of EU citizens, particularly with regards to the prevention and treatment of cancer including empowerment of patients in self-care. They also called for greater investment in research into an integrated approach into the care and treatment of patients with cancer.

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