



Acupuncture Charter Vienna 2013

On the 30th anniversary of the founding of ICMART, the Acupuncture Charter of Berlin 2001 is today revisited.

Acupuncture has been practiced as a part of traditional East Asian medicine for over 2000 years, and encompasses a wealth of empirical experience. Interest in the practice grew tremendously in the West over the latter half of the 20th Century, and to an even greater degree in the last 30 years.

The growth in medical acupuncture took place as a result of its perceived efficacy in acute and chronic pain, as well as in functional and reversible organic disorders. High quality evidence now exists to support its clinical use for a wide range of problems based on randomised controlled trials and systematic reviews, although there is still considerable debate over the interpretation of results of sham controlled trials. Basic scientific research has determined many of the neurophysiological and neuropharmacological mechanisms by which acupuncture works.

Medical acupuncturists make a conventional medical diagnosis prior to treatment and only use acupuncture when indicated. Patient safety is of paramount importance.

The full integration and regulation of medical acupuncture has not followed as rapidly as has the growth in public interest and pragmatic use of the technique. Acupuncture education and research has, for the most part, taken place outside the conventional medical teaching centres, and thus it has often been ignored, or encountered strong resistance.

The development of medical acupuncture has not progressed at the same rate in all countries. The degrees of integration of acupuncture, medical and traditional, within national healthcare provision have differed widely.

The participants of this ICMART congress in Vienna, 30th November to 1st December 2013, strongly commit themselves to the following:

1. Setting up unified international quality standards of medical acupuncture in education, practice and research according to the principles of contemporary medicine:
 - to optimise the effects of acupuncture and the safety for patients
 - to follow evidence based medicine (EBM) in its broadest definition
 - for application in all appropriate medical specialties
 - to integrate acupuncture into modern medicine and health care.
2. Strengthening relationships between national medical acupuncture societies in Europe and throughout the world
3. Further collaboration with the World Health Organisation
4. Extending national co-operation with:
 - University Medical Schools
 - Institutions of healthcare
 - Health funding organizations
 - Research funding organisations in healthcare
 - Other medical organisations of acupuncture
 - Patient organisations

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