

# Proceeding of Traditional and Modern Medicine Dialogue Forum(I)/Initiation and Mechanisms of the Traditional and Modern Medicine Dialogue



## Introduction

Today, in the whole world and in all nations, modern, also scientific, medicine is the mainstream of medicine, whereas in modern medicine allopathic medicine is the mainstream. Traditional medicine has a long history and is the accumulation of experiences. It takes care of patients using a holistic concept for the whole body. The World Health Organization divides traditional medicines into Chinese traditional medicine, Indian traditional medicine, Egyptian traditional medicine, Arab traditional medicine, and Greek traditional medicine. Undeniably, traditional medicine has its healing effectiveness, and we should take a square look at it values. We ought to go deep in the studies, keep the good and discard the bad. Only so can we make traditional medicine modern and scientific and make it into a complementary and alternative medicine (CAM).

On May 26, 2002, the World Health Organization for the first time issued the Strategy for Traditional Medicine 2002-2005 and proposed more 180 nations to include this in their medical policies. As of now, the study of traditional medicine is unfolded in many advanced nations and has become a common effort of Western nations.

More than 180 nations have included CAM in their medical treatments. In Taiwan, by the end of 2003, 35 contract Chinese medical hospitals and 2,422 Chinese medical practitioners offered treatment under the National Health Insurance Program. There are 3,963 traditional medical practitioners in Taiwan and, therefore, CAM has

become a pretty common industry.

The outlay of the National Health Insurance Program for traditional medicine topped NT\$16.85 billion in 2003, a large percentage of the total, indicating the insurance program had given pretty much support to traditional medical treatment. Seeing the need for modernizing the traditional medicine, the Department of Health, Executive Yuan, established the Committee on Chinese Medicine and Pharmacy and invited Dr. Lin I-hsin to serve as its chairman. Our aim is to modernize traditional medicine through scientific and evidence-based methods and to enable it to play an ideal CAM role.

We should brighten up the value of traditional medicine. As of now, Taiwan has become the first nation to cover traditional medical treatment in national health insurance. We hope in the future the development of Chinese traditional medicine will be modernized further and herbal medicines will become more scientific, and there will be more standardized procedures for related medical treatment. This calls for the publication of a book that contrasts the names and diagnoses of illnesses used in Western medicine and in Chinese medicine. Through such contrast and through dialog, traditional medicine and modern medicine can join up to provide better care to the people.

It is hoped that the publication of this book will help the development and application of Western and Chinese drugs, promote complementation and mutual support between the two branches of medicine, and in the end raise the standard of our nation's medical treatment for the benefit of our people and even the peoples across the world.