

The Current Trend of Information and Publication of CCMP



Introduction

The advance of information technology has breathed a new life into the archives and publications of traditional Chinese medicine. To sort out the old archives, make researches, or use modern medical methods in evidence-based clinical evaluation and the analysis of research results all need digitalization. Digitalization can make indexing, retrieving, classifying and managing easier, and the boundless web is an efficient weapon for propagation, globalization and modernization. In view of these advantages of digitalization, it is natural for linking the archives and publications on traditional Chinese medicine and pharmacy with modern information technology. Combined, they have created a new era for Taiwan's herbal medicine information and publications.

When the Committee on Chinese Medicine and Pharmacy was established under the Department of Health on November 1, 1995, it grasped this global tendency of development. So, it included an information division in its organization to take charge of information development, sort out archives, compile annual reports, and develop related information technologies. The division has contributed much to the rapid development of Taiwan's Chinese medical information and publications and to the enhancement of the efficiency of this committee. In addition, it has worked hard in the provision of service to herbal medicine circles and the establishment of a health education and publicity channel, with remarkable results.

Since 1993, this committee has selected the themes for digitalization to be made by contract. In 12 years, 55 items have been

completed. On May 24, 1997, we held an international symposium on information technology for Chinese medicine and pharmacy in order to understand the world trend and the strength and weakness of strategies adopted by different nations, so that we could learn how to improve the strategy of our own. Seven years have passed. We need to hold another one to examine our achievements made in the past and at the present and to chart a course for our future endeavor. In this way, we hope we can sustain the effort of digitalization for Chinese medical information to attain the goal of propagation and globalization. Now, we have entrusted Prof. Yong-hsiung Chang, dean of the Chinese Medical Institute at the Chinese Medical University, to take charge of this special case. On September 10, 2004, we gathered information and archive development experts for a meeting in the committee's conference room to set the direction for future development of Chinese medical information and publications. On September 19, 2004, we held at the Chinese Medical University in Taichung a symposium on Taiwan's Chinese medical publications in conjunction with the national association of herbal medicine businesses. We hoped that through inviting the participation by experts we could build up the atmosphere, expand the scope, and strengthen the interchange between the industry, the government and the academia in the study of Chinese medical books.

To mark its ninth anniversary, the CCMP published, on the proposal by experts, a book as part of a series to record the story of Taiwan's development of Chinese medical information in more than a decade. The book, titled Chinese Medicine Development Series (5) the Current Trend of information and Publication of CCMP, is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1, Present and Prospects of Taiwan's Herbal Medicine Information and Publications, dwells on the current state and the direction of future development. Chapter 2, Accomplishments of Outsourced Researches, 1996-2004, is a collection of the digests of the achievements of outsourced projects to introduce the subjects and highlights of the researches to readers for them to know the policy changes and the time background. Chapter 3, the Development and Situation of CCMP's e-Operations, analyses the government's e-operation plans, including the 1993 plan for constructing an administrative information net, the 2000 e-economic development plan, the 2001 e-government promotion plan, and the 2003 initiative on

promoting horizontal writing for public documents. In the chapter, the committee, as the competent agency of Chinese medicine and pharmacy, presents its innovations, in response to the plan, including the establishment of an information system and a knowledge platform for the service of the people aimed at disseminating correct knowledge of Chinese medicine for health education to the people. The chapter also introduces its e-government service of Chinese Medicine Information Network platform (www.ccmp.gov.tw), the various software systems, and new plans submitted to and approved by the Department of Health in the previous three years. A few of the plans were innovative at the time, including the search system for herbal medicine ads and a system for checking the progress of a permit application or an ad case, which are considered as vital tools for rendering service and improving administrative management of herbal medicines. Chapter 4, Forum for Chinese Medicine Information and Publications, introduces a platform for experts to express their opinions and make proposals on the development of Chinese medical information and publications. Chapter 5, a Summary of the 2004 Symposium on Taiwan's Chinese Medical Information and Publications, presents the incisive views expressed at the September 19, 2004, gathering to enable those who did not participate in the meeting to see what had happened on the occasion. Chapter 6, an Introduction to CCMP Publications, 2002-2004, singles out the most important publications from the more than 80 titles to let readers know the committee's operations and the plaudits it has earned.

Here, I want to take the opportunity to convey my respect to all those who have contributed their articles and who have participated in the expert discussions and the symposium of Taiwan's Chinese medical information and publications for their incisive views. If not for their participation and help, this book would not be able to make an appearance. I would also like to express my thanks to the editorial staff for their painstaking effort to complete this book aimed at recording the trail of the development of Taiwan's Chinese medical information and publications.