

19th May 2010

CHINESE TRADITIONAL MEDICINE INTERESTS EXPRESS GRAVE CONCERNS OVER EUROPEAN LEGISLATION

Through the good office of the Chinese Medical Institute and Registry (CMIR) and the UK Chinese Medical Council (CMC), Dr Robert Verkerk and Meleni Aldridge of the Alliance for Natural Health International (ANH-Intl) were invited to visit China.

Facilitated by Professor Mei, Vice Chair of the World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (WFCMS) and the Specialty Committee of the Chinese Materia Medica, Beijing, high-level meetings were held with relevant government authorities, academic and research institutions, as well as enterprise organisations. Discussion on environmental, health and related legislative issues were frankly exchanged as part of a continued East-West dialogue in finding solutions to problems of mutual concerns, both in China and Europe. Discussions included consideration of the impact of the EU's Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive (THMPD) (Directive 2004/24/EC) on the practice of traditional Chinese medicine in Europe.

Following the meetings, Professor Mei said: *"The issue of optimum integration of eastern and western healthcare systems is high on the agenda if healthcare systems are to benefit from medical traditions that have evolved over millennia. I strongly support all actions that work towards achieving this aim. As an east-west integrator, my life's work is devoted to cultivating East-West understanding for a better world. Regulations should be reasonable to engender human progress."*

Dr Robert Verkerk and Meleni Aldridge also attended two important special forums in which they presented papers on the subject of the looming implementation of the THMPD which, in its present form, will severely, and disproportionately, impact non-European herbal medicinal traditions such as traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and Ayurveda.

Positive responses were expressed by the Chinese authorities and organisations in protecting the legitimate interests of Chinese medicine and its tradition in Europe. Together, TCM interests in both China and Europe will seek to forge a reasonable regulatory regime for non-European traditions. To achieve this, mutual respect and collaboration between medical and regulatory specialists in both the West and China will be required.

Commenting on meetings in China, Dr Verkerk said: *"EU legislation on traditional medicines has not taken into account the complex nature of very long-standing non-European medical systems. As a result, it discriminates against the traditional medical systems of both China and the Indian sub-continent, amongst others."*

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These two systems alone are integral to over one-third of the world's population. It is vital that amendments to the THMPD are enacted urgently to allow its better adaptation to the diverse range of long-standing traditions for which it was originally designed."

Practical steps and actions were discussed in achieving the above objectives. This press release calls for the support from all individuals and organisations that are concerned about natural health systems and East-West understanding and cooperation, including those with specific concerns about the full implementation of the THMPD after 31 March 2011.

Given the short time scale, interested parties are invited to contact ANH-Intl as a matter of urgency.

ENDS.

CONTACT

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Further information and concerns about the EU Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive (THMPD):

Download ANH briefing paper on THMPD:

[http://www.anhcampaign.org/files/080630 ANH-Briefing Paper THMPD.pdf](http://www.anhcampaign.org/files/080630%20ANH-Briefing%20Paper%20THMPD.pdf)

About the Chinese Medical Institute and Register (CMIR):

<http://www.cmir.org.uk/>

About the Chinese Medical Council (CMC) UK:

<http://cmc-uk.org/>

About the World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies:

<http://www.wfcms.org/English>

About the Specialty Committee of the Chinese Material Medica:

<http://www.wfcms.org/english/detailasc.aspx?innerID=200812113531843>

About ANH International

www.anhinternational.org

Alliance for Natural Health International is an internationally active non-governmental organisation working towards protecting and promoting natural approaches to healthcare. ANH-Intl campaigns across a wide range of fields, including for freedom of choice and the use of micronutrients and herbal products in healthcare. It also operates campaigns that aim to restrict mass fluoridation of

water supplies and the use of genetically modified foods. Through its work particularly in [Europe](#) and the [USA](#), the ANH works to accomplish its mission through its unique application of 'good science' and 'good law'. The organisation was founded in 2002 by Dr Robert Verkerk, an internationally acclaimed expert in sustainability, who has headed the organisation since this time. ANH-Intl is working collaboratively with a wide range of scientists, lawyers, medical doctors, health practitioners, politicians and consumers, to help facilitate the development of scientific and legal frameworks appropriate to natural, sustainable and bio-compatible systems of healthcare.

See also the websites for:

Alliance for Natural Health Europe - www.anh-europe.org

Alliance for Natural Health USA - www.anh-usa.org