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Acupuncture Today

December, 2001, Vol. 02, Issue 12

Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Coalition Steering Committee Formed

By Editorial Staff

Representatives of five national organizations in acupuncture and Oriental medicine met in Alexandria, Virginia on October 13-14 to discuss ways of improving communication among the many diverse viewpoints in the profession and to consider the possibility of forming a new umbrella organization to focus on professional, educational, and advocacy goals.

Participants included representatives from the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM); the Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Alliance (Alliance); the American Association of Oriental Medicine (AAOM); the Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (CCAOM); and the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM).

The result of the meeting was a resolution to study the feasibility and possible structures for an umbrella organization that would be a more efficient and effective means of communicating the profession's achievements and concerns to the public and policymakers.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, honor and credit are due all the individuals and organizations that have painstakingly and courageously laid the foundations for the establishment and growth of the acupuncture and Oriental medicine profession in the United States and have sought to facilitate and improve communication among the diverse voices that the profession encompasses; and

WHEREAS, representatives of these voices and organizations believe that the profession might be well served by the creation of a new nonprofit professional and educational organization to achieve greater public awareness of contributions that acupuncture and Oriental medicine practitioners,

educators, and other professionals are making to the quality of health care in the United States; and

WHEREAS, such an organization may be a more effective and efficient means to benefit both the public and the profession by achieving such goals as developing a representative forum to facilitate communication and the sharing of views among the diverse branches of the profession, coordinating advocacy efforts to communicate these views to policymakers, increasing public awareness of the profession, and developing collaborative relationships with related disciplines and organizations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the undersigned have formed the Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Coalition Steering Committee to gather feedback from the profession and study the feasibility and possible structure of a new umbrella organization to achieve the goals outlined above and to effectively represent the diverse professional constituencies in the United States.

Ann Bailey, Vice President, Alliance

Dori Bigg, Executive Director, ACAOM

Ian Cyrus, Vice President, AAOM

Debra Duncan, Executive Director - Operations, NCCAOM

Steve Given, Member-at-Large, CCAOM

Christina S. Herlihy, Chief Executive Officer, NCCAOM

Penelope Ward, Director of Professional Services, ACAOM

Carla Wilson, President, Alliance

October 14, 2001

Alexandria, Virginia

To facilitate this goal, the representatives agreed to establish a steering committee that would seek input from practitioners, educators, regulators, and other professionals as it developed proposed alternative governance structures for the new umbrella organization, which would be able to represent more efficiently and effectively the various constituencies in the rapidly evolving health care profession.

While recognizing the need for organizations like ACAOM and NCCAOM -- which conduct national educational accreditation and professional certification programs -- to remain independent and autonomous, the steering committee hopes that the new organization will accommodate the diversity of the profession but also permit coordination of advocacy efforts, establishment of new educational initiatives to benefit both the

public and the profession, and development of collaborative relationships with related organizations and disciplines in health care.

"The outcome of our work holds the potential to fully transform the profession," said meeting participant Carla Wilson, president of the Alliance, based in Olalla, Washington.

Ian Cyrus, another attendee, who serves as vice president of the AAOM in Catasauqua, Pennsylvania, echoed this view. "We all view this as an opportunity to finally, as a profession, come together. This is no small effort but no task could be more vital at this time."

The steering committee plans to meet again in Dallas, Texas, in February 2002 to review feedback from the profession about the concept and goals of the new organization.

Submissions may be sent to AOM-CSC via e-mail at aomcsc@acupuncture.com, or via regular mail at P.O. Box 3986, Redondo Beach, CA 90277.



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