

Dr. Tom Shepherd Named President of Bastyr University

By Editorial Staff

SEATTLE -- After an extensive search, the board of trustees of Bastyr University has selected Thomas Shepherd, DHA, to be the school's next president. Dr. Shepherd succeeds founding president Dr. Joseph E. Pizzorno Jr., who announced his retirement earlier this year.

"We are thrilled that Dr. Shepherd has accepted the president's position," said Don Murphy, chair of Bastyr's board of trustees. "This is a very exciting time in Bastyr's history, due to the phenomenal growth of natural medicine. Tom Shepherd is uniquely qualified to lead Bastyr to our next level of success."

Shepherd joins the staff of Bastyr after serving nearly three decades in the fields of health care administration and management. He previously served as president of Royal Healthcare, a hospital management company based in North Carolina that he co-founded in 1988. He has served in a consulting or administrative role for more than 50 hospitals in the U.S. and has shown a deep commitment to the expansion and of complementary and alternative medicine.

Dr. Shepherd holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Fairleigh Dickinson University, a master's in health services administration from George Washington University, and a doctor of health administration (DHA) from the Medical University of South Carolina. He is also a fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives and is active in several community, civic and philanthropic organizations.

"This is one of the most unique opportunities in health care higher education," said Dr. Shepherd upon being named president. "Bastyr is one of the world's leading centers of excellence in natural medicine, and there is tremendous growth potential for both Bastyr and this medicine. I'm excited about the challenges and opportunities."

Recently, *Acupuncture Today* spoke with Dr. Shepherd about his appointment as Bastyr's president. In addition to outlining his plans for the college, Dr. Shepherd described his vision of complementary and alternative medicine's role in the health care arena and what role Bastyr will play in the continued emergence of CAM in the United States.

AT: Congratulations on being named Bastyr's new president, Dr. Shepherd. Tell us a little bit about your philosophy towards complementary and alternative medicine and its role in American health care.

TS: I am deeply committed to complementary and alternative medicine. I have developed a great personal interest in natural medicine over the past 25 years for both my family and myself. I believe that the current popularity of CAM will continue, and that it is the wave of the future for American health care. I see the traditional delivery of health care changing fundamentally during my lifetime.

AT: How does Bastyr University fit into that role?

TS: Bastyr is one of the world's leading centers of excellence in natural medicine. There is tremendous growth potential for both Bastyr and CAM. Bastyr University's natural health clinic and research institute have been influential players in purporting CAM. Bastyr is privileged to house many of the world's leading scientists and faculty of natural medicine.

AT: What changes or improvements would you like to see made at the college?

TS: The first thing I want to do is become familiar with the university and get to know the people. I want to meet all of the faculty and staff members that make Bastyr what it is. I want to become familiar with our student body and determine the expectations of our future health practitioners.

AT: What short-term and long-term goals do you have in mind for the school?

TS: Again, my immediate goal is to become completely immersed in Bastyr as soon as possible. Once I'm on the job for a little while, I will be able to more accurately answer this question.

AT: CAM has made a tremendous amount of progress and respectability in the last decade. Where do you see it going in the next 5-10 years, and what direction would you like to see Bastyr take in guiding the acupuncture and Oriental medicine professions?

TS: As I mentioned earlier, Bastyr University has been a huge player in the acceptance of CAM. Bastyr's journey has only just begun, and we will continue to do what we've been doing. Bastyr will continue educating exceptional health practitioners and increasing the number of professionals in acupuncture and Oriental medicine careers.

Bastyr University promotes the study of the biosciences as part of the acupuncture and Oriental medicine education. Our graduates are strong, well-rounded practitioners who succeed in both the AOM clinical world as well as the Western medical world. Our future vision is one of integrated medicine in which the wisdom and knowledge of both Western and Eastern medicines are able to co-exist.

The health care industry is in the midst of a dramatic shift. Because of this shift, the next few years will be a time of dialogue and potential clinical interface between Eastern and Western medical practitioners. We encourage the profession to embrace this opportunity.

With the newly developed standards for doctoral programs set by the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, we expect to see a significant number of schools beginning to offer advanced courses of study over the next few years. I would like to see Bastyr University join the professional AOM community in offering a rigorous course of professional study.

AT: What message do you have for the acupuncturists and Oriental medicine practitioners in the U.S.?

TS: I would say, congratulations! The widespread legal recognition of acupuncture and the public demand for this ancient wisdom is remarkable. This phenomenon has occurred through a lot of very hard work over the past 20 years. We need to continue to work to make sure that acupuncture and Oriental medicine are recognized in all 50 states. We need universal insurance reimbursement at both the private and public levels available to all consumers. And we need to maintain the high standards of training and clinical care that have been established by this field. I look forward to joining and supporting this work.

AT: Thank you, Dr. Shepherd.



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