



EU policy “Investing in Health” and the added value of CAM

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Examples from actual practice

1. Patient seriously ill, affected by highly virulent bacteria
Antibiotics are live saving

2. Patient having recurrent infections, many courses of antibiotics.

No adequate solution. Leading to antimicrobial resistance.

It's about SUSCEPTIBILITY

Solution: CAM diminishes susceptibility, enhances level of health and patient's resilience. No further infections.

Examples from actual practice

1. Patient with asthma or migraine or hypertension, etc.
Treatment: management of symptoms by long-term use of conventional medication. No final, effective solution.

2. Same patient with asthma or migraine or hypertension, etc.
CAM doctor/practitioner: what made this patient susceptible?

It's about SUSCEPTIBILITY

Solution: CAM diminishes susceptibility, enhances level of health and patient's resilience. Less conventional medication or even no medication at all required.

Two models of health and disease

Conventional medicine	CAM
Focusing on the parts	Focusing on the system
Health is absence of disease	Health is resilience, i.e. the ability to respond adaptively to a wide range of environmental hazards, infectious agents and psychological stressors
Disease is a local disruption	Disease involves person as a whole
Combating the disease	Strengthening patient's resilience
Managing symptoms	Creating and maintaining health and well-being

Citizens' demand for CAM

- ❖ CAM is a broad societal phenomenon in the whole Western world; exponential increase over the last 2 decades
 - ❖ up to 90% of people with chronic conditions, > 50% of all breast cancer patients
- ❖ Increasing personal responsibility for one's own health
- ❖ Preference of a more holistic view of health and healing – beyond simply managing symptoms
- ❖ Preference of more gentle and natural therapies first before any harsher or synthetic ones
- ❖ Dissatisfaction with conventional medicine, i.e. unpleasant side effects, ineffective treatment, long-term use of medication and dependency on it.

Benefits of CAM

- ❖ Aimed at restoring the patients' own natural systems for fighting disease and maintaining health.
- ❖ Combines individualised holistic care with active participation of the patient
- ❖ Lesser need of high-impact medical interventions and conventional medication and the long-term dependency on it.
- ❖ Lesser need of antibiotics, reducing the problem of antimicrobial resistance.
- ❖ High patient satisfaction, increased quality of life, and reduction of absenteeism.
- ❖ Mostly low-cost treatment, lesser need for high-cost interventions.
- ❖ Safe treatment with hardly any adverse effects.
- ❖ Increasing evidence for its effectiveness and cost-effectiveness.

Investing in health

❖ Investing in sustainable health systems

- ❖ CAM reduces the use of specialist and hospital care
- ❖ CAM promotes health and helps preventing disease
- ❖ CAM ensures cost-effective use of medicines - they are inexpensive and reduce the expensive long-term use of conventional medication regimes.

❖ Investing in people's health as human capital

- ❖ CAM helps empowering patients, “an important and promising aspect of chronic disease management”
- ❖ CAM focuses on creating and maintaining health and preventing disease

❖ Investing in reducing health inequalities

- ❖ Several CAM modalities combine basic health education with treatment of illness on an individual basis and in community settings.
- ❖ Use of cost-effective CAM interventions makes more resources available for programmes necessary to reduce health inequalities.

Requests to Commission

- ❖ Does the Commission recognise the added value of CAM for EU health policy?
- ❖ If so, is the Commission willing to include CAM in their health policies?
- ❖ If so, is the Commission willing to encourage Member States to explore the ways in which CAM can contribute to sustainable healthcare systems?

Thank you for your attention

Any questions?



EUROCAM unites European umbrella organisations of patients, doctors and practitioners in the field of Complementary and Alternative Medicine.

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