

MANIFESTO

European Parliament 2019-2024



<https://cam-europe.eu>

COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE for sustainable patient-centred healthcare

EUROCAM is the European foundation that represents the views and interests of various European umbrella organisations that are made up of either patients or Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) practitioners. This includes doctors, veterinarians and practitioners who practise various disciplines of CAM in Europe.

EUROCAM covers a broad spectrum of CAM modalities, including acupuncture, Ayurveda, anthroposophic medicine, herbal medicine, homeopathic medicine, naturopathic or traditional European medicine, osteopathy and traditional Chinese medicine.

The practice of CAM modalities affiliated to EUROCAM is based on clinical expertise, which has been collected in the course of their existence, and the best available clinical evidence from scientific research built over the last few decades.

Through the umbrella organisations, EUROCAM represents 60,000 organised patients/citizens, 250 national CAM associations and a substantial part of the 400,000 physicians, veterinarians and practitioners in this sector across Europe.

Current challenges to healthcare in Europe

EU health systems are facing a number of challenges, like ageing populations, antimicrobial resistance, non-communicable diseases and soaring healthcare costs.¹

CAM can make a substantial contribution to address these health policy issues as CAM treatments are more adapted to the individual needs of patients and complement conventional medicine to improve treatment outcomes.

Moreover, CAM modalities can often be used as a first option in treating many conditions, reducing the use of usually costly conventional drugs, which nevertheless would remain for use if required. CAM modalities can help to prevent the long-term dependency on conventional medication and to reduce the enormous burden of mortality and morbidity caused by the adverse effects of conventional drugs.

Therefore, EUROCAM calls on the European Parliament, the Commission and the Council, in the 2019-2024 legislature, to include CAM in their policies to tackle the following issue:

¹Companion 2017 report on the State of Health in the EU, European Commission, available from https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/state/docs/2017_companion_en.pdf



Non-Communicable diseases

NCDs, including cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes account for 70% of all deaths and more than three out of four years lived with a disability.

Up to 80% of health care budgets across the EU are spent on treating chronic diseases, the total costs for EU economies being €115 billion.⁵

Prevention is key to avoid ill health and achieve a high level of mental and physical well-being effectively and efficiently.

Healthy lifestyle modifications including nutritional counselling, exercise training, and stress management techniques improve outcomes for patients at risk and for those who already have common NCDs.

If lifestyle modifications alone are not sufficient to restore health, CAM modalities are especially appropriate to support and induce the self-regenerating process of the individual. With the aid of medicines of natural origin and the patient's own commitment to change, CAM aims to restore health. Improving health implies reducing not only the disease process, but also the susceptibility to illness and disease. This diminishes the need for conventional drugs and high-cost medical interventions.

NCDs, number one cause of death and disability worldwide

EUROCAM calls on the EU political leaders to

- Encourage Member States to take note of World Health Assembly resolutions WHA62.13 and WHA67.18 that urged Member States to:
 - integrate Traditional Medicine (TM) and CAM within national healthcare systems by developing and implementing national TM policies and programmes;
 - promote the safety, efficacy and quality of TM/CAM by expanding the knowledge base and providing guidance on regulatory and quality assurance standards;
 - establish systems for the qualification, accreditation or licensing of TM/CAM practitioners;
 - increase the availability and affordability of TM/CAM.
- Encourage Member States to take note of the WHO's Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023, which support Member States in developing proactive policies and implementing action plans that will strengthen the role Traditional Medicine (TM) and CAM plays in keeping populations healthy;
- Support Member States with knowledge transfer of integration of conventional medicine and CAM to enable more effective, accessible and resilient health systems;
- Promote the inclusion of CAM in all possible EU public health policy and programmes dealing with health education and promotion, prevention and treatment of chronic disease, health inequalities, and active and healthy ageing;
- Improve EU legislation and regulation of CAM medicinal products, practices and providers, and facilitate their free circulation.

⁵ OECD/EU (2018), Health at a Glance: Europe 2018: State of Health in the EU Cycle, OECD Publishing, Paris. https://doi.org/10.1787/health_glance_eur-2018-en