

This issue marks the completion of five years of publication of the journal. The quality, diversity, and number of submitted manuscripts have increased over the period. In addition to articles from local researchers, we have received many manuscripts from our neighbours New Zealand and further afield in Asia and Europe. This is a healthy sign and reflects the increasing professionalisation and status accorded to Chinese medicine both on a national as well as international level.

Central to professionalisation is how to further develop Chinese medicine. Two main methods are 'back to the tradition and classics' and 'modernisation'. These two are considered contradictory by some people; I see however the necessity of both. Indeed, 'walking with two legs' is far quicker than with one. As for modernisation of Chinese medicine, an example of a narrow concept would be to use advanced technology to identify active compounds of Chinese medicinal herbs.¹ This does not reflect the opinion of this journal. I consider that what current Chinese medicine practitioners do is a process of modernisation, which this journal has been proudly facilitating. This issue provides fine examples of how Chinese medicine is transforming in Australia and other western countries in the areas of research, health service and clinical practice.

Standards for reporting interventions in controlled trials of acupuncture (STRICTA),² first developed by acupuncture researchers from western countries, represents the utilisation of rigorous scientific methods in reporting acupuncture treatments. For the first time, the needling process was dissected and recorded in details and replication becomes possible. Potential authors are well advised to consult STRICTA and indeed we require that any clinical research submitted to this journal comply with its requirements. In this issue, we publish the updated version of STRICTA. In his guest editorial, Zaslowski illustrates the background and significance of the guidelines. Another example in this category is the recent report by the National Institute of Complementary Medicine, in which advanced mathematical modeling was developed to analyse the cost-effectiveness of acupuncture and other complementary therapies. You will find further details in *Current Research and Clinical Applications*.

One paper in this issue that infuses a local flavour of modernisation of Chinese medicine concerns the characteristics of a rural Australian acupuncture practice. The patient profile

differs distinctly from that of its Chinese counter part. Rural acupuncture clinics in both countries seem, however, to serve a similar purpose, to some degree, filling the gaps in the healthcare system resulting from deficiency in services and staffing.³

Three other papers in this issue represent two ways of how knowledge of Chinese medicine can be used and modified to treat ailments of modern diseases. The first one looks at the herbal formulae associated with *wen bing* (warm diseases), which theory was developed in China in the 16th century, and their potential use for avian flu (H1N1). While speculative in nature, the paper offers a method for practitioners of how to flexibly utilise ancient knowledge to examine modern health concerns. It also behooves practitioners to become familiar with classic literature and return to the essence of Chinese medicine. The case report of using acupuncture to treat HIV associated neuropathy further strengthens the point. From a different spectrum, a second case report reflects how knowledge of modern anatomy and pathology can be incorporated into acupuncture practice to enhance its therapeutic effect on plantar fasciitis. Both case studies also give helpful advice to practitioners who may be struggling to treat such conditions.

Finally we have the first of a two-part series interview with Professor Wang Juyi, who becomes well known in the West through his collaborative work with Jason Robertson in *Applied Channel Theory in Chinese Medicine* (reviewed in Vol 4, Issue 2). In the interview, Professor Wang shares with us his thoughts on acupuncture practice in the past and future.

I am sure that you will enjoy reading this issue—so turn the page and start reading.

References

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3. Xu J, Yang Y. Traditional Chinese medicine in the Chinese health care system. *Health Policy*. 2009;90:133–9.

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