

# History of Development of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture in Canada

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The history of development of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture has been mentioned in a research paper written by Nadine Ijaz. However, I believe the study has not reflected or based on all the accurate historical facts according to my own experience. Therefore I would like to share the facts surrounding the regulation of the Traditional Chinese Medicine Profession which includes the practice of TCM Acupuncture and the current status of TCM regulation in Ontario.

In 1970s, the regulation of TCM and acupuncture has not been established in Canada, the legal practice of TCM and acupuncture has been controlled by western medical acupuncture associations. At that time, western medicine license has been required to practice TCM and acupuncture. Personally speaking, I have been harassed many times while practicing in Ontario, which inspired me to challenge the current dominant authority of western medicine organizations. In 1976, I have obtained the license to practice Acupuncture in California, US, and planned to immigrate to US with my family. However, we finally decided to stay and lobby for the recognition and regulation of TCM profession and acupuncture in Ontario. Since then, I have contacted several local councillors from London Ontario, hoping that they can understand the principles of TCM and acupuncture are different from the principles of Western Medicine and help the regulation of TCM and acupuncture. The regulation of TCM and acupuncture can not only grant the right of practice to TCM practitioners, but also protect the safe benefits for the general public.

Later on, I realized that regulation of medical and health care area is beyond the power of municipal administration, and it is within the jurisdiction of Ontario Government. To promote the regulation of TCM and acupuncture, my family and I have driven back and forth between London Ontario and Toronto. We tried our best to communicate with TCM practitioners in

Toronto. We hoped to establish a TCM and acupuncture association so that we can make our voice heard by standing together as a group. After a several discussions with experienced and new TCM practitioners, including Zhuoran Zhou, Yuzhai Cen, Yuexiu Xie, and David Quang, we decided to name our association as “The Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture Association of Canada”(CMAAC).

We submitted our application for organization registration to Ontario Government, however it has been refused due to the two words “Chinese Medicine” that cannot be contained in a title of an organization. Soon after that, we submitted registration application to the Federal Government, again it has been refused due to the large amount of rejections by those western medicine organizations. I wrote a letter to Judy Erola, Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, of Federal Government and gained her attention and support. Finally, in 1983, the Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture Association of Canada has established successfully.

Before the establishment of CMAAC, there was another issue has drawn public’s attention. One acupuncturist called Pierre Gaulin has been accused by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) for practicing acupuncture without a license. However, he won the court case. This meant the practice of Acupuncture was beyond the administration of the CPSO. However, the public was not protected from unqualified and incompetent practitioners. Every profession should have a clear standard of practice so that the best interests of general public can be served.

Since establishment, the objective of CMAAC has been the promotion to lobby for the regulation of TCM and acupuncture profession in Ontario during Conservatives, Liberals and the New Democrats jurisdiction. We have experienced a great deal of difficulty in gaining the recognition of the profession that it deserves. With the assistance of the public, CMAAC was able to finally draw the Ministry of Health’ attention to the importance of TCM and Acupuncture regulation. A 10,000 signature petition was submitted to Hon. David Winninger, M.P.P. in March 1994, and he submitted it to the Ministry of Health of Ontario. After a series of discussions, we received a few positive responses. Later, the President of AFC has reached a verbal agreement with CMAAC. The main features of this agreement were Western Physicians could use acupuncture as an adjunct to treat their patients but cannot use the title “Acupuncturist”. Only those who passed

the examination of the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupunctures of Ontario (CTCMPAO), could use the titles like “Acupuncturist” and “Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioner”. This was also applied to other health care professions. This is because other health care professions have limited training of acupuncture, compared with traditionally trained acupuncturists and TCM practitioners.

In the following Liberals government period, CMAAC has gained the support from the Premier of Ontario, Minister of Health George Smithman, and Deb Matthew M.P.P., who all showed strong support for the regulation of TCM and Acupuncture in Ontario. George Smithman has proposed the “Doctor” title and started to promote the regulatory process of TCM and Acupuncture. During that period of time, a small group of people from TCM profession showed their objectives to the regulation of TCM and acupuncture. Despite their objectives, regulatory process was completed, and TCM Act was established for the TCM and Acupuncture profession.

In order to promote the exchange and communication of TCM profession, as well as enhance the professional healing art and skills, I set up the Institute of Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture, Canada in 1989. This institute provided four years’ programs and the basic admission requirement for enrollment was university degree in science. Most of our students came from Canada and US. Graduates from our institute have all obtained their local practice licenses.

After several years’ effort that CMAAC has made, in 2006, TCM Act has been set up. In 2008, Transitional Council of the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario has been established, and it was my honor to be appointed as the First-term President of transitional council of CTCMPAO. After resigning from CTCMPAO as a council member, I ran for CMAAC presidential election and was elected in January 2016 for a three years term.

Contribution to regulation in Ontario is not the only achievement of CMAAC. British Columbia, Newfoundland, Alberta, and Quebec were greatly benefited by the active participation of CMAAC in the regulation of the profession of TCM and Acupuncture. Finally, I must say that the operation machine of CMAAC must be kept going for the promotion of TCM and

Acupuncture and the protection and safety of the general Canadians. Unity of the profession is the main key of our endeavour. The tremendous contribution of my beloved wife, His Ping Lin, the former Director General of CMAAC is greatly indispensable. At last, I would like to express my appreciation to Kelly He and Ava Yang, the head office staff of CMAAC for their help in preparing this article.

#### Background

1970 Western University, Canada Bachelor of Arts

1973 Certified Doctor of Examination Yuan, Taiwan

1977-2016 Licensed Acupuncturist, State of California, U.S.A.

1983 President of CMAAC

1985 Doctor of Science, Medicine Alternative, UN

1990 Vice-President, The World Federation of Acupuncture-Moxibustion Society (WFAS)

1990 Chair, WFAS Legislation Committee

1990 Vice-Chair, WFAS International Acupuncture Practitioner Proficiency Examination Committee

1991 Honorary Professor, Shanxi Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China

1991 Visiting Professor, Nanjing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China

1992 Honorary Professor, Yunnan Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China

1993-1995 Visiting Professor, Guangzhou University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China

2011 Licensed Doctor Department of Health, Executive Yuan R.O.C. Taiwan