

Editorial

This is a special issue for the World Federation of Acupuncture-Moxibustion Societies (WFAS) 8th World Conference on Acupuncture, Sydney 2013. The first time WFAS held its conference in Australia was in Gold Coast 2004. Nine years on, Chinese medicine in Australia has moved forward and upward rapidly with national registration coming into place in 2012.

We celebrate this special event by releasing this issue at the conference, publishing a selection of high quality conference abstracts, and interviewing two conference keynote speakers, Professors Alan Bensoussan and Charlie Xue, two most prominent Chinese medicine educators and academics in Australia. Professor Xue, the Chair of the Chinese Medicine Board of Australia, recalls his work in many areas of Chinese medicine in Australia over the last 16 years and his vision of Chinese medicine in this country. Professor Bensoussan, Director of National Institute of Complementary Medicine, shares his experience of being a new practitioner, his achievements in the last 15 years and his path to where he is today. We hope their stories will put 'fire in the belly' to our readers. We intended to interview a keynote speaker from China, Prof Baoyan Liu, President of the China Association for Acupuncture and Moxibustion and Executive Vice-President of the China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences, China. Unfortunately, due to his busy schedule, we will interview him at the conference instead and the interview will be published in the first issue of 2014.

Early this year, I visited northern Europe and had the opportunity to communicate with Chinese medicine associations abroad. In contrast to Australia, Chinese medicine is not a registered profession in any European country, and does not have an established university program in many European countries. United Kingdom, Norway and now Germany (as of September 2013) are exceptions. Our peers overseas look to Australia for examples and are fighting hard for their statutory status. In this issue, we publish two foreign correspondences on Chinese medicine in Belgium and in Norway.

As usual, we publish peer-reviewed articles. One of them discusses the cognitive-behavioural effects associated with Chinese medicine consultation. Traditional consultation is considered essential as it helps differential diagnosis. The authors suggest that the process itself perhaps has therapeutic effects due to the holistic framework and underlying philosophy. We hope this fresh look at consultation encourages our readers to be aware of cognitive-

behavioural therapy-like effects of Chinese medicine. The other two peer-reviewed articles are lead-authored by two current post-graduate students. In one paper, the author analyses a failed case and reflects on why acupuncture treatment was not successful in relieving pregnancy-related nausea and vomiting. Sometimes, even with correct diagnosis and treatment, the patient might not get better. This case highlights the importance of patient-practitioner collaboration and managing expectations. It is not common for practitioners to discuss failed cases, yet we perhaps learn more from such cases than successful ones. The third paper reports a case in which a skin rash in a pregnant woman was successfully treated. The case was considered difficult to treat by a general practitioner, yet a practitioner without years of dermatology training treated the case successfully simply by following Chinese medicine principles.

All three papers highlight, from different angles, the essence of our medicine: to see and treat people holistically. How often we forget the fundamentals during busy clinical practice. Once I heard an experienced practitioner saying: 'It is easy to use acupuncture to treat pain, just needling *Asbi* points'. The above-mentioned case report could be due to new practitioner's luck, but it could also be that our students can teach experienced practitioners a thing or two about not forgetting the basics.

In current research reports, we introduce to you a recent Cochrane systematic review on Acupuncture for Fibromyalgia. The lead author John Deare also reflects on the arduous process of writing this review, and provides advice for those who want to write such a review. In this issue, there are also book reviews and conference reports as usual.

Please remember this is our members' journal, and academics are not the only people who can write papers. As you can see in this issue, two papers are from post-graduate students. We encourage educators, students and practitioners to share their clinical cases, their thoughts and experience. If you want to share clinical experiences, please write them as case reports, which we consider the best way to illustrate clinical thoughts.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue, and enjoy the WFAS conference.

Zhen Zheng
Editor-in-Chief