



NCCAOM  
*Diplomate*  
*E-News You Can Use*  
  
*Spring 2018*



## From the Desk of the CEO



The 2018 Chinese New Year began this year on February 16 - the Year of the Earth Dog. During the Year of the Dog, satisfaction and joy will occur from successful outcome of projects undertaken in the previous year, the Year of the Fire Rooster, 2017.

The productivity of last year, as well as the previous investment of efforts in 2015, 2016 and earlier are coming to fruition in 2018. In 2015 the NCCAOM set several strategic goals for the organization, two of which related to increasing opportunities for NCCAOM Diplomates to be successful in their careers as acupuncturists. These goals were to:

- *Expand the Value of the NCCAOM Credentials to Assure and Advance Professional Opportunities for NCCAOM Diplomates*
- *Integrate NCCAOM Credentialed Providers into the United States Healthcare System*
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Before embarking on these goals to promote our Diplomates and their certifications, the NCCAOM undertook a needs assessment of our Diplomates and we found that the number one recurring request of all our Diplomates was for the NCCAOM to create [a marketing and public relations campaign](#) to promote our Diplomates and to advocate for NCCAOM National Board-Certified Acupuncturists™. We launched our campaign in May of 2016 and have documented the following outcomes in 2016 and 2017:

- Visits to the NCCAOM Website - **179% increase since 2014**  
 2014(n=599,208)  
 2016(n=1,062,100)  
 2017(n=1,078,392)
- Find a Practitioner Visits - **188% increase since 2014**  
 2014(n=128,134)  
 2016(n=212,284)  
 2017(n=241,300)

To read full article, click [here](#).



## Integrative Health Policy Consortium (IHPC) Integrative Health and Wellness Caucus: Amidst the Opioid Crisis



NCCAOM representatives Matthew Stanley, Public Member, Board of Commissioners and Mina Larson, Executive Deputy Director, were pleased to attend the IHPC sponsored Caucus focusing on integrative health solutions on March 15<sup>th</sup> in Washington DC. Representative Jared Polis (D-Colo)., and Mike Coffman, (R-Colo), kicked off

the inaugural [Integrative Health and Wellness Caucus: A bipartisan Congressional effort](#). In the midst of the largest American health crisis in recent history, this new Caucus was the first event that provided legislative staff and other policy and regulatory officials the opportunity to understand how shifting focus in healthcare to prevention, health creation and promotion can create cost savings while improving health outcomes for Americans. Rep. Polis specifically mentioned acupuncture and acupressure in his remarks as examples of proven alternative treatments and emphasized the importance of increasing access to “evidence-informed therapeutic resources.”

In addition, Lt. Gen. Eric Schoomaker, the former Army Surgeon General, and Dr. Ben Kligler, the Director of the Coordinating Center for Integrative Health in the Veterans Health Administration, presented an overview of efforts to increase integrative health in the Veterans Administration (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD). Gen. Schoomaker also pointed out that acupuncture and other integrative treatments actually have more evidence of efficacy than opioids. Dr. Kligler addressed the VA’s efforts to integrate a “whole health model” into their treatment plans by organizing clinical care around what is most important to each individual veteran. He outlined the VA’s plan for complementary integrative health delivery, as directed by the Comprehensive Addiction & Recovery Act (CARA) as well as the VA’s development of 18 demonstration centers for whole health around the country. As per the recent [NCCAOM press release announcing Acupuncturists Now Included in the VA Health Administration](#), Dr. Kligler identified acupuncture as one of the proven complementary treatments used at these centers. This thrilling news from the VA will hopefully open doors to establishing qualifications for NCCAOM® National Board-Certified Acupuncturist™ in other federal agencies.

NCCAOM was also proud to have its very own Bill Reddy, NCCAOM National Board-Certified Acupuncturist™ and IHPC Board member, present on the efficacy of acupuncture and the growing use of treatment nationwide.



The event was a successful introduction to the Caucus on Capitol Hill and provided an opportunity to raise the profile of integrative and complementary medicine among Congressional staffers and other policy makers. NCCAOM is a Partner for Health member organization of the IHPC. Dr. Kory Ward-Cook, NCCAOM CEO currently holds that IHPC Board seat.

## More Diplomat Services and New Look for NCCAOM



The NCCAOM Academy of Diplomates was launched last year to provide additional services and more value to our Diplomates. Please see the [NCCAOM Academy of Diplomates Factsheet](#). This year, the NCCAOM has hit the ground running with finding more ways to promote your NCCAOM National Board-Certified Acupuncturists™ credential. Working with the media is just one of the examples of what the Academy is doing to get the word out about our National Board-Certified Acupuncturists™. [Please see the Public Education Campaign Page and our Press Center](#) featured both on the NCCAOM and Academy websites.

Also, we have dedicated a special timeline to posting updates and news on how acupuncture can help with the [Opioid epidemic](#). This includes a white paper and other timely articles written by prominent members of the acupuncture community. We will be continuing our work on this very important topic as we make the public and media aware of acupuncturists' role in helping with pain management and addiction. Meanwhile, through our advocacy efforts we have reached out to [the Senate Finance Committee, via a letter](#) to present the benefits to having NCCAOM National Board-Certified Acupuncturists™ be part of the solution to combatting the opioid crisis.



The NCCAOM and the Academy are also rebranding this summer with a new logo, fresh website and innovative marketing materials to promote your certification. The rebranding is to emphasize the importance of the NCCAOM brand when consumers, other practitioners and others are looking for acupuncture treatments. We are also registering NCCAOM Board-Certified Acupuncturists™ with the US Patent and Trade Office to ensure that only our NCCAOM Diplomates can use this designation and that it is exclusive to those who have received the training, education and assessment of a National Board-Certified Acupuncturists™. Other services such as a job board will also be available to you as our valued Diplomate. Look for the new website this summer.

## Did You Know?

The NCCAOM published their official [Dry Needling Position Statement](#) last year to help state associations and regulatory boards with providing support regarding this issue and supplying information about standards. The NCCAOM over the last several years has worked with states by supplying letters and testimonies against the practice of dry needling by PTs and other allied healthcare practitioners based on their lack of training, education and assessment of acupuncture competency.



## Safe Chinese Herbal Compounding and Dispensing Needs Assessment Survey Results



Safety and protecting the public is a concern for Chinese herbal medicine practitioners and the acupuncture and Oriental medicine (AOM) profession. To that end, the NCCAOM created the Safe Chinese Herbal Compounding and Dispensing Taskforce, consisting of a diverse group of herbal professionals, to study the potential of creating a certificate



of qualification (COQ) program in safe compounding of Chinese herbs. The first step in determining if a certificate of qualification (COQ) program should be initiated was to conduct a needs assessment to determine the AOM profession's overall support and interest for NCCAOM to create a program for the safe compounding and dispensing of Chinese herbal formulas by acupuncturists practicing Chinese herbal medicine.

The Safe Chinese Herbal Compounding and Dispensing Taskforce completed the needs assessment in December 2017. Five hundred sixty-six (N=566) respondents participated in the survey. Overall results were positive in supporting the development of the COQ herbal safety program. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the participants strongly agreed/agreed that voluntary competency verification was needed for herbalists to safely compound and dispense Chinese herbs. The Taskforce members determined from the practitioners' comments that those in favor felt safety in compounding and dispensing was necessary to protect the public. The majority felt that acupuncturists practicing Chinese herbal formulae compounding should meet FDA requirements before they are forced to. The respondents were in favor of the NCCAOM moving forward with creating a Chinese Herbal Compounding Safety COQ.

Fifteen percent (15%) of the responses were neutral and had no opinion either way. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of the practitioners replied they strongly disagreed/disagreed to additional training. Concerns centered around the current extensive training already received in school and most were confused that the certificate program would be a mandatory requirement. Practitioners expressed that FDA standards are meant for herbal manufacturing companies and are too strict for most solo practices to comply.

Based on the positive survey results and the NCCAOM's concern for some practitioners' negative responses and confusion, the NCCAOM is planning to host a webinar and publish some articles to educate and raise awareness about the need for a Chinese Herbal Compounding Safety COQ. Work will also continue with subject matter experts to develop the educational program for this voluntary Chinese Herbal Compounding Safety COQ.



## NCCAOM Official Practice Tests: Coming Soon!



Exciting things are happening here at NCCAOM. We are finalizing the NCCAOM Exam Prep Center featuring the NCCAOM Official Practice Tests™.

The launch of the NCCAOM Official™ Practice Tests will take place this Spring. These practice tests will include a diagnostic report to help students and examination candidates prepare for

the NCCAOM Board Exams. Most importantly, these practice tests will be structured similarly to the NCCAOM certification exams.

Please note: NCCAOM Diplomates will be able to gain PDA points for successfully taking these practice tests. We will be launching the NCCAOM Exam Preparation section of our website with the practice tests by this Spring.

## Call for Volunteers



The NCCAOM is actively seeking a Diplomate for our **Biomedicine Exam Development Committee**. The Diplomate must be dually licensed as a Licensed Acupuncturist (or state equivalent), and also hold an MD, DO, or RN degree. This individual should have a strong knowledge of pharmacology, be available for in-person

meetings beginning in May and July of this year, be NCCAOM certified as either a Diplomate of Acupuncture or Diplomate of Oriental Medicine, be fluent in English, and ideally have graduated from acupuncture schooling within the past 7 years. The committee work demands an individual with strong collaborative and consensus seeking skills.

The exam development process is critical to establishing baseline competency for the profession. The work involved between meetings is generally minimal, though some training and concise assignments will occur. This is an opportunity to help maintain and shape the NCCAOM biomedical exam, utilizing critical thinking skills and creativity to edit and create exam items, consider appropriate content for the test based on the NCCAOM Job Task Analysis, and work in a positive team environment. Committee



members are asked to serve for a minimum of three years following an initial year as a guest of the committee.

Please send an email to [executiveoffice@thenccaom.org](mailto:executiveoffice@thenccaom.org) if you are interested in this position

## Notice About Meridians Journal

Please note that the *Meridians: The Journal of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine*, will no longer be offered online via the NCCAOM Academy of Diplomates or NCCAOM websites. The NCCAOM supports the Journal, through advertisements, but is no longer a sponsor. The Academy continues to explore other sponsorships and affinity partnerships as a benefit of active NCCAOM certification. Meridians is now the official journal of the [American Society for Acupuncturists \(ASA\)](#).

