

## NCCAOM ASA Town Hall

### Naming the Profession

October 24, 2021

Questions were submitted at the Town Hall and post Town Hall to  
[culturalcompetency@thenccaom.org](mailto:culturalcompetency@thenccaom.org).

They were answered on October 31, 2021 by  
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[Town Hall recording](#)

[Power Point Slides](#)

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**Question:** What do you mean the next couple of years? settling on naming or Medicare issues.

**Answer:** Medicare within the next few years; our profession needs to have the naming situated prior to Medicare.

**Question:** Will a list of all of the brainstormed names be available and/or circulated?

**Answer:** A list will be provided with the survey. There is an additional space for your recommendation if it is not found on the list.

Naming Recommendations:

- Can we drop the "puncture" part?
- Can we be "Ancient Classical Holistic Medicine" ?
- Can we be called Eastern biomedicine?
- Can we keep Oriental Medicine?
- Holistic Medical Acupuncture or Holistic Acupuncture Medicine
- What about Acupuncture and Allied Medical Arts?

**Question:** Can you repeat why using "Traditional" wasn't appropriate?

**Answer:** In the webinar, the term Traditional by itself was not discussed. The term Traditional Chinese Medicine is one aspect of the medicine we practice. Some of our practitioners use Classical Chinese Medicine or Traditional Japanese Medicine, as well as other styles. Therefore, Traditional Chinese Medicine is not an inclusive term.

Traditional Medicine is a term used by the World Health Organization to represent all traditional medicines, which includes Chinese Medicine, Ayurvedic Medicine, African traditional medicines, Aboriginal medicines, and all other indigenous peoples all of the world. Therefore this term is too broad for us to use this term Traditional Medicine to refer to our medicine would not be appropriate, as it is inclusive of so many forms of traditional medicines.

**Question:** Could you write down and put on your website somewhere what you discussed about why East means sick man?

**Answer:** The term East Asia implies "Sick Man of East Asia." It is a term that is triggering to some in the Chinese community due to the history of the "Century of Humiliation.

<https://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/history-chinas-humiliation-and-hurt-feelings-olympics>

**Question:** When will the survey be coming out?

**Answer:** The survey will be coming out in early 2022 to allow more time for comments.

**Question:** Wondering how acupuncture medicine is appropriate when indigenous people in the Americas practiced acupuncture and Mayan curanderos still do? It should be differentiated as not to subsume their traditions

**Answer:** "Practica de medicina de punción" or the "the practice of puncture medicine" was conducted using fine bones and plant thorns employing them as needles, and the use by Mayan Medicine practitioners of puncture medicine was common. The term "acupuncture" was not specifically used with Mayan medicine. For more information, please refer to [Wind in the Blood: Mayan Healing and Chinese Medicine](#) by Hernan Garcia, Antonio Sierra, and Gilberto Balam.

**Question:** What is the name of the profession in other countries?

**Answer:** The name of the profession is associated with the history and size of the country. For example, Koryo is Korean Acupuncture (in Korea), there are many terminologies used in European countries such as Acupuncture, Chinese Medicine and Traditional Chinese Medicine

**Question:** Were practitioners surveyed before the term "Acupuncturist" was proposed and adopted? If we choose another term to identify ourselves, I guess we have to use that term where and when?

**Answer:** For more information, please see this Acupuncture Today Article entitled [Acupuncture Earns Unique BLS Code](#), as well as this letter from the Acupuncture Professional organizations to the [Standard Occupational Classification Policy Committee](#).

**Question:** How could the name include those whose scope of practice include Homeopathic Medicine?

**Answer:** Homeopathy is not a core curriculum subject in acupuncture schools. As it is a separate profession, we honor the homeopathic medicine practitioners by asking those who are licensed to do so, to include that in their degree titles.

**Question:** Why East Asian, as opposed to south or southeast asian?

**Answer:** Geographic region of East Asia refers to China, Taiwan, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Hong Kong, Macau, and Mongolia

South Asia refers to India, Nepal, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

Southeast Asia refers to Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Philippines, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, Andaman and Nicobar Island.

**Question:** In this review, are you excluding traditions like Vietnamese acupuncture that weren't in the definition of East Asia that you gave earlier?

**Answer:** Vietnam is considered to be a part of SouthEast Asia. Therefore, it is not generally considered an "East Asian" country. While there are practitioners of Vietnamese acupuncture, such as Van Nghi, the term East Asian Medicine would theoretically not include Vietnamese Acupuncture. We hope you will consider this as you cast your preference in our survey.

**Question:** How does just the word Acupuncture honor the origin of the Medicine?

**Answer:** The term acupuncture does not necessarily honor the tradition of the medicine. However, adding a definition which includes the origin of the medicine along with all the modalities practiced with acupuncture, would allow this BLS term to be more inclusive.

**Question:** Would it not be important to keep the word Medicine in?

**Answer:** Yes, including the term "medicine" would imply that we diagnose as well as treat with the modality of acupuncture and tradition of our entire medicine.

**Question:** Will you create a survey with open ended free questions with real options to answer freely?

**Answer:** Yes, along with the list of terminology presented, there will be an opportunity to write in your preference.

**Question:** Discarding the term Chinese Herbal Medicine as in Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine creates problems to me in the aspect of our NCCAOM certification exams and the curriculum in our acupuncture schools - our curriculum is Chinese Herbology.

**Answer:** October 29, 2021. Our medicine is currently not referred to as Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine. This terminology is used for the curriculum in some schools and the current certification. The term Oriental was chosen in the 1990s to encompass our profession in a way that was not exclusive of different lineages. However, this term is now not the most culturally appropriate, and it is not accepted in legislation by the United States government.

**Question:** How can we rename our profession if ACAOM has already changed their name?

**Answer:** The term chosen by our profession will guide the future of our medicine. The Cultural Competency Task Force's upcoming survey is being conducted to facilitate discussion and more industry-wide agreement on how we should refer to our profession to the public, regulators, in research, etc., and give input to our representative institutions and organizations.

**Question:** With respect to the possible renaming of the profession, what happens to those who have a master's or doctorate degree in "Oriental Medicine"?

**Answer:** Please refer to your acupuncture school for more information.

**Question:** What are the implications for including "medicine" in our professional name in terms of our relationship with physicians, nurses, etc?

**Answer:** In many states, our profession is referred to as Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine. Therefore, by removing the term "Oriental" it leaves us with Acupuncture Medicine. We are not adding to our professional title in this instance. States already differ with the inclusion of "medicine" in state practice acts. Some states already include "medicine"; other states do not expressly include "medicine" due to barriers from the medical licensing board. The results of this survey will not impact inclusion or exclusion of the the term "medicine."

**Question:** Most of us have fully trained in East Asian Herbology so we already know (it is inferred) that not including the word Herbology would be ok. Would we be ok with Licensed Acupuncturist/Acupuncture?

**Answer:** Not all acupuncture school curricula include herbology. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that most acupuncturists are fully trained in herbalism. The designation of "acupuncturist" in the BLS code is inclusive of other modalities the scope of "our" medicine. For those of us who are trained in herbal medicine, we would still currently be categorized as acupuncturists according to BLS. Some of us are acupuncturists, with a certification in herbal medicine.

**Question:** I would like to know where to take the cultural competency course for licensing. Please respond at your leisure.

**Answer:** There are no current mandatory requirements for cultural competency, as of yet. However, there are many cultural competency courses offered for practitioners. Please refer to our [Cultural Competency Resource Guide](#).

**Question:** At what point is our profession going to acknowledge that this medicine stretched from Europe down to what used to be called the Middle East but it's now called western Asia all the way over to Asia that it was an all encompassing medicine of many different lens and stop focusing or medicine on just the east?

**Answer:** While the iceman was found to have tattoo markings near acupuncture regions such as joints, points alone do not make a system. At this time, there is no historical information based on the medical systems associated with the markings. For photos, please [refer to this article](#).

**Question:** What do practitioners do who have a "oriental medicine" degree? We can't change our degree. How do we move forward if we rename our profession with respect to our credentials?

**Answer:** Changes to professional degree titles would be dependent on updates by individual colleges/universities and ACAHM.