



CTCMA Annual General Meeting 2002

Held at Simon Fraser University on Wednesday, August 28, 2002

Present: Mason Loh (Board Chair), Randy Wong (Registrar), Richard Mew (Auditor), Barry Davidson (Insurance consultant), Alex Meier (Broker of University Insurance), staff of CTCMA, and 168 registrants.

Meeting began at 19:30 with Mason Loh in the Chair.

Mason, on behalf of the board, welcomed everyone to the first Annual General Meeting of the College.

1. Adoption of Agenda

Agenda was adopted with no amendments.

2. Chairman's Remarks

Mason reported that last year was an important year in the TCM profession because the TCM bylaws were passed on April 2001. The establishment of the College was to govern the TCM profession in the interest of the public. Our mandate was to protect the public by creating professional standards and professional environment.

Public Protection

In meeting the College's mandate of "Public Protection", Mason reported that the College had established an Inquiry Committee to investigate public complaints about our registrants. Four complaints had so far been handled. The College had also established a Disciplinary Committee to impose penalty on registrants who had violated their professional standards/ethics. Besides, following the passing of the TCM bylaws, College had done a lot of media interviews on the issues of TCM and acupuncture ranging from small town newspapers to MacLean magazine; from web-based news reports to TV programs. Public education would be an on-going job for the College and more resources would be put into this field in the coming years.

Professional Standards

Mason reported that in meeting the College's mandate of protecting the public, the College had set professional standards in licensing our members through grandparenting registration and full registration. At present, more than half of the TCM grandparenting applications had been processed according to the registration standards. Regarding the full registration, the college had created the herbology examination in the past year. Together with the existing acupuncture examination, our College was the first in North America to license TCM

practitioner through examination. Moreover, the College had also designed a series of safety courses which was mandatory for licensing. In future, doctor level examination, safety course for doctor title and TCM school accreditation would be the College's top working priorities.

Professional Practice Environment

Mason reported that the College had created the Scope of Practice Committee to review and protect this profession. This Committee would also help expand the TCM scope of practice and keep watch on other health colleges' scope of practice especially in the overlapping areas. Mason further reported that in March this year, Randy and Shelley Page, both representing the College had appeared at the Romanow Commission's hearing to present our submission regarding the role of TCM and acupuncture in future Canadian health care system. Besides, the College had also worked out protocols with hospitals' administrations in B.C. to allow our acupuncturists to treat patients in hospitals. Mason further reported that in this year, the College had accomplished the reciprocity arrangement with Alberta and Quebec to recognize the acupuncture registration among the three provinces. Finally, the College had also successfully obtained our group malpractice insurance which would be covered in details under item (8) of the agenda.

Mason thanked all the board members for volunteering their time and contribution to the College. In addition, Mason, on behalf of the board, thanked Randy and the staff of the College for the hard work in the past years.

3. Registrar's Report

Registrar filled in more details in the three areas mentioned by Mason.

(a) Public Protection

Randy reported that our Inquiry Committee had reviewed four complaint cases and two of them were:

Case One- sexual offence

One registered acupuncturist was alleged with sexual offence in Nanaimo and resulted in temporary suspension of acupuncture licence. Police had charged him. A final decision of the Inquiry Committee would be made depending on whether this person was found guilty in court. Once the Inquiry Committee had determined the registrant to have breached the ethical standards of the College, his case would then be moved to the disciplinary process.

Case Two- public injured by needles

This case involved a patient's complaint on injuries resulted from acupuncture needles during the treatment. As recommended by the Inquiry Committee, the registered acupuncturist went through additional trainings and changed his practice procedure accordingly. Case resolved.

The other two cases were still pending.

(b) Professional Standards

Randy reported that the College had created different sets of professional standards for our registrants during the past few years. For instance, the College had established professional

standards for Acupuncturists, Herbalists and TCM practitioners and were written in two documents named “Core Competencies of Regulated Acupuncturists in B.C.” and “Core Competencies of TCM Practitioners in B.C.” The core competencies for acupuncturists was the document that had set out the recognized standards of the entry-level knowledge, skills and abilities that an acupuncturist should possess. This document was mutually agreed by the three provinces in Canada – B.C., Alberta and Quebec. The Core Competencies also served as an essential foundation for the acupuncture licensing examination. The core competences for TCM practitioners had outlined all the entry-level that TCM Practitioners in B.C. were expected to possess upon entry to practise and to maintain throughout their career. This document had also formed the basis of the herbology licensing examination. Randy added that liaison with China, US, Hong Kong and Australia regarding professional standards would be on-going. Copies of these documents were available in the College website. In the near future, College would be moving forward to develop the doctor level examination and safety course for doctor title. Besides that, TCM schools accreditation and apprenticeship guidelines would also be our next targets in the future development.

(c) Professional Environment

Title protection

Randy reported that in ensuring the professional environment for our registrants, the college had sent out more than 100 warning letters to non-registrants who were advertising themselves as acupuncturists in the yellow pages of B.C. Initially, good cooperation was received by Dominion Publication to stop putting acupuncture advertisement for those non-registrants in their directories. However after the company became a national publisher, they could not enforce the rule because there was no common standard nationally. Thus, their office would not be able to make cross check with other health colleges. It appeared that the College would have to take up the role.

Clean-up advertisement

Randy reported that the College would continue regulating the marketing policy of our own registrants to ensure that the advertisements undertaken by our registrants in respect of their professional service should be accurate and verifiable and could not create in the public’s mind an unjustified expectation about the results that they could achieve. For example, some people promised a certain percentage of ‘cure rate’ on their advertisements, letters were sent to these registrants to notify them of the inappropriateness of their marketing strategy. Most of our registrants responded with compliance, except for one applicant who claimed “100% cure rate” and was reluctant to correct her advertisement. Eventually, she withdrew her application and left the country.

Scope of practice protection

Randy report that the College was very concern about the recent proposed changes made by the Ministry of Health Planning with the Health Profession Act. The Health Professions Council would make recommendations in its report for new scope of practice definitions and reserved titles for each profession. The College would keep close watch on this development and would respond to the Ministry any possible impacts to our profession.

Insurance

Randy reported that throughout the years, many insurance companies had added acupuncture treatments done by our Registered Acupuncturists to their extended health care group coverage. However, complaints had still been received from the public on an extended health care plan administered by Sun Life that only acupuncture treatments performed by medical doctors are covered officially. The College had suggested the complainants reporting to their employers to change their plan coverage or they could go back to their insurance company to revise their plans.

4. Financial and Auditor's Report

Mason introduced Richard Mew, our auditor, to our registrants and projected onto the screen the Financial Statements for the year ended March 31, 2002 prepared by Richard for registrants' perusal. Mason quoted the last paragraph of the covering letter of the audit report to the registrants, i.e. "In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the College as at March 31, 2002 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles." Mason stated that initially this report had been approved by the board. Following fairly detailed explanation on the audit report, Mason asked for the motion to adopt the report.

Moved for adoption : David Li Lam

Seconded : James Pau

Motion passed unanimously.

5. Re-appointment of Auditor

Mason reported that as a matter of formality, board would like to recommend Richard Mew and his company to be re-appointed since Richard and his company had been the College's accountant and auditor for the past few years. Mason asked for the motion of the re-appointment.

Moved for adoption : Kit Wong

Seconded : Bhupendra Kumar Singh

Motion passed unanimously.

6. Information on Board's December Election

Randy reported that the terms of office of the current professional members on the board would expire on December 31 of this year. According to the College bylaws, 6 professional members would be elected and at least one of them should be from the province of BC outside of the lower mainland. Board election notification and nomination paper would be sent to all practising registrants next week. Randy further explained that all practising registrants would be divided into two main categories: (i) R.Ac and R.TCM.H and (ii) R.TCM.P and Dr. TCM. Each registrant may nominate for office one practising registrant who was in good standing. The nominee and the nominator should be in the same category and geographical regions. After receiving all the nominations, ballot papers would be mailed out at the end of October and the counting of the ballots would be tentatively scheduled at mid December.

7. Announcement of The First Group of Registered TCM Practitioners

Randy reported that among more than 550 TCM grandparented registration, 80% of the applicants had applied for the Dr. TCM title. College had spent considerable manpower and time to verify each claim to demarcate between an applicant's eligibility for the Dr. TCM title. This verification process slowed down the whole registration process, making it impossible for the College to complete all applications before August. In order to entitle more TCM registrants to participate in the first board election, Board had decided, as an interim measure, to confer a TCM Practitioner status to all Dr. TCM applicants, if they were indeed qualified, for election purpose only.

Randy indicated that due to the sensitivity of announcing the list of those approved TCM Practitioners in public at this moment, and to the possibility that some applicants using this as a marketing strategy, the names would be made to the applicants themselves only after the meeting tonight. For applicants who were not yet approved, it did not necessarily mean they were less qualified or even rejected. In many cases, it was only because the evaluation of their applications was still in progress.

8. Any Other Business – Practice Insurance

Randy reported that as requested by most of the registrants, the College had hired a health care consultant, Dr. Barry Davidson, to research on the most suitable insurance company to provide the mandatory group insurance package for our registrants. The intent of the group insurance was to protect the College, the practitioners and the public. The benefit of having group insurance was to ensure that all our registrants were insured by the same insurance company which covered TCM scope of practice to the same extent as stipulated in our regulations. Group program could also provide substantial discounts on the insurance and other additional benefits to the registrants. After the research, the proposal put forward by the University Insurance was recommended by the consultant as the most cost-effective and comprehensive one. Randy introduced Barry and Alex Meier, the representative from University Insurance, to our registrants and invited them to present the whole package to the registrants and answer enquiries from them. After the presentation, Mason asked for the motion of appointing University Insurance to underwrite the group insurance policy for the College.

Moved for adoption : Henry Dent
Seconded : James Pau
Contrary : 3 registrants
Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.