

## Perspective

# Address at the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Comrade MAO Ze-dong's Instruction on Western Medicine Doctors Learning Traditional Chinese Medicine

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(October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018)



Distinguished leaders, guests, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. Today, with great reverence, we gather here to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Comrade MAO Ze-dong's instruction that Western medicine doctors should learn traditional Chinese medicine (TCM).

On behalf of the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (NATCM), I would like to extend my warm congratulations on the convening of today's meeting and pay tribute to people who have been working in the field of integrated Chinese and Western medicine at the front line. My sincere gratitude also goes to the Party Committees and governments at all levels and all sectors of the society who have long cared about and supported TCM.

MAO Ze-dong and other revolutionaries at the time trusted and attached great importance to TCM and made instructions on it. On the same day 60 years ago, MAO Ze-dong made an instruction on the *Summary Report of Organizing Full-Time Training Class for Western Medicine Doctors to Learn TCM* submitted by the Party Committee of Ministry of Health, giving credit to the training class and stressing that "TCM is a great treasure, which should be fully explored and greatly improved". He also emphasized that "If we could organize such training classes with 70–80 people lasting 2 years in each county, city and province in 1958, there would be about 2,000 senior doctors specialized in integrated Western medicine and TCM by winter in 1960 or spring in 1961". It fully demonstrated the attitude of the Communist Party of China (CPC) towards TCM and the trust, concern and support of the Chinese government to TCM

development, thus laying a sound foundation and policy support for the integration of TCM and Western medicine and outlining the cultivation of high-level medical professionals in China.

We are very delighted to see that through 60 years of arduous exploration and diligent work, the integration of TCM and Western medicine has made tremendous progress in aspects of service system, practitioner cultivation and research, becoming an indispensable part of TCM development and an important driver in the construction of Healthy China. By the end of June 2018, there are 609 integrated medicine hospitals with a total of 101,991 beds. 83.6% of public general hospitals at/above the second-class set up TCM Department or Integrated Medicine Department. An increasing number of people receive both Chinese and Western medical treatments in the hospital. Throughout the country 48 institutions of higher learning have medical education of integrated medicine major, constituting a systematic practitioner training system. We now have more than 240,000 medical practitioners specialized in integrated medicine with multiple research achievements that have drawn the world's attention and a large number of experts and leading talents such as TU You-you who won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine and the State Science and Technology Top Awards, Academician CHEN Zhu who has been awarded Sjoberg Prize, National TCM Master, and Academician CHEN Ke-ji who won the first prize of National Science and Technology Progress Award, Academician CHEN Xiang-mei who has been awarded a First-Class Merit of the Central Military Commission.

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All these could not have been achieved without the efforts made by generations of integrated TCM and Western medicine workers or the support from Party Central Committee, the State Council, Party Committees and governments at all levels and people from all walks of life. Therefore, on behalf of the NATCM, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude and respect to you all.

Today's event is not only an opportunity to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Comrade MAO Ze-dong's instruction that Western medicine doctors should learn TCM, but also a chance to review the development and achievements of integrated medicine during the 60 years when we have received strong support from Party Central Committee on the equal development of both Chinese medicine and Western medicine and inheritance of TCM.

Since the 18<sup>th</sup> National Congress in 2012, with a highly strategic and overall vision, the Party Central Committee and the State Council have been promoting the coordinated development of Chinese and Western medicine by the principle of equal emphasis on both. At the National Conference on Hygiene and Health in August of 2016, President XI Jin-ping pointed out that it is a remarkable advantage for China to put equal emphasis on both Chinese medicine and Western medicine which should complement each other in a coordinated fashion. This remark points out the direction and guideline for developing Chinese and Western medicine coordinately, building Healthy China and ensuring people's health. The *Law on TCM* issued on December 2016 states that China encourages the mutual learning, and the complementary and coordinated development between TCM and Western medicine so as to tap into their respective advantages and promote the integration of them. Furthermore, we shall apply both modern technology and TCM research method in carrying out the TCM research and the integration of TCM and Western medicine so as to inherit and innovate TCM theories and techniques. *The Outline of Healthy China 2030* issued by CPC Central Committee and the State Council in October 2016, and *the Outline of the Strategic Plan on the Development of TCM (2016–2030)* issued by the State Council in February 2016 have mapped out a grand blueprint for the current and future health and TCM development in

China, and put forward policies that are vital to the integration of TCM and Western medicine.

Since the 18<sup>th</sup> National Congress, especially after the 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress, socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era. The CPC Central Committee with XI Jin-ping at the core has put more emphasis on the development of TCM, and pointed out in the *Report at 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress* that we will support both TCM and Western medicine, and ensure the preservation and development of TCM. *The Report on the Work of the Government in 2018* further stated that we will preserve TCM and support its development. Related decisions and arrangements made by our government fully demonstrate the determination and confidence of the Party and the country to ensure people's health and develop TCM in the new era, providing broad space for its development.

TCM in China is embracing an unprecedented opportunity for its development and the integration of Chinese and Western medicine is now at a new starting point. Promoting the development of integrated Chinese and Western medicine in the new era is conducive to accelerating the inheritance, innovation, scientific and technological progress in TCM, advancing supply-side structural reform in the health field, optimizing the health services supply, meeting people's multi-level and personalized health needs, promoting the change of work mode and guaranteeing people's health throughout lifecycle in an all-round way. In the new era, while remembering the care and support of MAO Ze-dong and other top leaderships in the past to the development of TCM, we should also have a deeper understanding of the endeavors made by the CPC Central Committee with President XI Jin-ping at its core for the development of TCM and the integration of TCM and Western medicine. When we study and implement XI Jin-ping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and the spirit of the 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress, National Conference on Hygiene and Health, President XI's instructions on TCM, we deeply feel the concern and support from the CPC Central Committee and the responsibility of revitalizing and developing TCM and promoting the integrated development of TCM and Western medicine in our efforts to build Healthy China and deepen healthcare reform.

In view of this, I would like to share some

opinions for your reference and comments.

First, we should stay confident of TCM and committed to the integration of it and Western medicine. President XI Jin-ping pointed out that TCM is the treasure of ancient Chinese science, and the key to the treasure house of Chinese civilization. It is a medical science that was formed and developed in the daily life of the people and in the long-term process of their fight against disease, and it is an original medical theory and technology system in China. Rooted in the fertile soil of Chinese traditional culture and contemporary science and technology, TCM is constantly enriching and developing in clinical practice. It has made a great contribution to the nation's procreation, country's prosperity and the people's health. The integration of TCM and Western medicine is also a typical example. Sixty years of practice has fully proved that the combination of Chinese and Western medicine has made remarkable achievements in solving major problems affecting human health. We should fully realize that promoting the integration of Chinese and Western medicine at a higher and deeper level in wider scope is conducive to enhancing self-confidence of the Chinese people in its culture, optimizing the supply of contemporary health services, improving the ability to deal with human health problems, and realizing the beautiful vision of "Health for All". We should further strengthen self-confidence in the development of TCM, adhere to the integration of TCM and Western medicine, and take more initiative to shoulder the historical mission and glorious responsibility entrusted to us by the Party Central Committee. We should inherit, develop and make good use of TCM left to us by our ancestors, thus helping TCM to play its due role in serving the objective of Healthy China and people's health.

Second, we must adhere to making TCM and Western medicine complementary to each other and improving the ability to prevent and cure diseases. As two different medical systems, TCM and Western medicine each have their own characteristics, advantages and expertise. The fact that TCM and Western medicine complement each other and develop harmoniously, and shoulder together the responsibility of maintaining and improving people's health has become an important feature and significant advantage for the development of health in China. Nowadays, there is an increasing number

of patients taking both TCM and Western medicine in their treatment, which improves the clinical efficacy and patient's life quality, and reduces medical costs and patients' expenditures. Integrated Chinese and Western medicine has shown irreplaceable advantages in the prevention and treatment of major diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases, diseases in immune system and nervous system, and infectious diseases such as acquired immune deficiency syndrome and hepatitis B, and it is even world-leading in term of diagnosis and treatment for certain diseases. The integration of TCM and Western medicine is not a simple "one plus one". It is the mutual influence, penetration and integration of two medical systems and letting them complement each other from theory to technology. The key of the integration is the overall planning of application, to play their respective advantages to the most and make breakthroughs in the curative effect, with an aim to achieving the maximum benefit and the best curative effect in the prevention and treatment of diseases. Tackling with the tough diseases and solving the medical problems that TCM or Western medicine alone cannot solve is the inherent advantage and core competence for the sustainable development of this discipline.

Third, we should be inclusive in advancing the integration of traditional and modern medicine. There is no such thing as panacea for all diseases so far. As President XI Jin-ping stressed, we must inherit, develop and utilize the traditional medicine in a rational manner. Application of TCM's holistic view and dialectical thinking to modern medicine and the use of modern medical technology in the diagnosis and treatment of TCM enable them to draw strength from each other on the same platform, solving medical problems that are difficult to solve by one medicine alone. The key to the healthy and sustainable integration of TCM and Western medicine is respecting their differences and building harmonious symbiosis. It is important to learn from each other and practice together with an open mind. Only by learning from each other can TCM and Western medicine understand and recognize each other's strengths; only when we dare to face our own shortcomings and earnestly draw strength from the other party can we complement each other. The coordinated development of the two medicines contributes to tackling modern refractory diseases and ensuring human health.

Fourth, we will adopt a demand-oriented approach for people's health. Health is what human survival and development build on and underpins people's livelihood. President XI Jin-ping pointed out that without the Health for All, there would never be a comprehensive well-off society. It is a common vision for mankind to deliver access to health for all which is also what all medical workers strive for. We aim to improve people's health through integrating the two resources of TCM and Western medicine with their complementary advantages. These efforts contribute to upholding the principle of "equal emphasis on both TCM and Western medicine" and implementing the strategy of building Healthy China. It is the path we must follow to promote health development with Chinese characteristics. In the new era, as people pay more attention to the quality of life, health and safety, they have higher expectations for health. Based upon people's growing need for health services, we strive to provide qualified and efficient medical services. We shall optimize the TCM service system, enhance capabilities in serving people, and foster the sound integration of TCM and Western medicine in ways that give full play to TCM's role in the prevention and rehabilitation and treatment of diseases so as to ensure healthcare services for all people who are concerned about the issue with keenest interest.

Fifth, we should pursue a path of high-quality development, and help Chinese people gain a stronger sense of fulfilment. The high-quality development of TCM refers to improving its contribution rate and positive influence and providing safe, effective TCM service for the Chinese people, so as to increase their sense of fulfilment. Being safe and effective is the most fundamental part of high-quality health service. To do that, professionals specialized in TCM, integrated TCM and Western medicine are prerequisite and key factors. Hence, we should explore a practitioner cultivation pattern in the new era

of those specialized in integrated TCM and Western medicine with focus on the Health China Strategy and the development needs of TCM while observing the growth law of talents in this field, in order to cultivate a group of high-level and energetic leading figures with a sense of innovation in TCM. Practitioners in integrated TCM and Western medicine should give play to their strengths in subjects and featured treatment, cultivate talents in both TCM and integrated TCM and Western medicine, foster the advantages of mutual learning and integrated development of TCM and Western medicine; meanwhile, more efforts should be made to achieve a substantial progress or breakthrough by exploring the features and laws of clinical diagnosis and treatment and summarizing successful experience and practices, so as to ensure high-quality development of TCM service and integrated TCM and Western medicine, and improve its prevention and treatment efficacy and service quality as well as the Chinese people's sense of fulfilment.

Health policies in the new era set new requirements for the TCM development and the integration of TCM and Western medicine. The construction of Healthy China and the deepening of healthcare reform requires TCM to play its unique role and entrusted the integration of TCM and Western medicine with new mission. We shall rally even closer around the Party Central Committee with President XI Jin-ping at its core and implement all the policy decisions made by the Party Central Committee and the State Council. We will be enterprising, working hard, and promoting the health well-being of our people. We are committed to building Healthy China and achieving a decisive victory in realizing a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation. Let's make new contribution to make these goals a reality.

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