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AYUSH SYSTEM OF MEDICINE

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AYUSH System of Medicine

The Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy (ISMandH) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India was created in 1995. This was re-named as Department of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) in 2003 with a view to providing focused attention to development of Education and Research in Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy systems.

The objectives of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy are to:

- Upgrade the educational standards in Indian Systems of Medicines and Homoeopathy colleges in the country.
- Strengthen existing research institutions and ensure a time-bound research programme on identified diseases for which these systems have an effective treatment.
- Draw up schemes for promotions, cultivations and regeneration of medicinal plants used in these systems.
- Evolve Pharmacopoeial standards for Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy drugs¹.

AYUSH SYSTEMS

Ayurveda: Ayurveda was divided into eight major clinical specialties.

- Internal Medicine - This branch deals with general ailments of adults not treated by other branches of Ayurveda.
- Surgery - This branch deals with various surgical operations using different surgical instruments and devices. Medical treatment of surgical diseases is also mentioned.
- Disease of supra-clavicular origin -This branch deals with dentistry, diseases of ear, nose, throat, oral cavity, head and their treatment by using special techniques.
- Paediatrics, obstetrics and gynaecology - This branch deals with child care as well as the care of the woman before, during and after pregnancy. It also elaborates various diseases of women and children and their management.
- Psychiatry - This is study of mental diseases and their treatment. Treatment methods include medicines, diet regulation, psycho-behavioral therapy and spiritual therapy.

¹ www.indianmedicines.nic.in

- Toxicology - This branch deals with the treatment of toxins from vegetables, minerals and animal origin along with development of their antidotes. The pollution of air, water, habitats and seasons has been given special consideration in understanding epidemics and pandemics.
- Rejuvenation and geriatrics - This branch which is unique to Ayurveda, deals with prevention of diseases and promotion of a long and healthy life².

Presently Ayurveda has well regulated undergraduate, post graduate and doctorate education in India. Commendable network of practitioners and manufactures exists. Infrastructure development in private and public sectors has improved the outreach to the community in a commendable way.

Yoga and Naturopathy

The concept and practices of Yoga originated in India about several thousands years ago. The science of Yoga and its techniques have now been reoriented to suit modern sociological needs and lifestyles. Experts of various branches of medicines including modern medical science are realising the role of these techniques in the prevention and mitigation of diseases and promotion of health.

Maharishi Patanjali, "The Father of Yoga" advocated the eight folds path of Yoga, popularly known as "Ashtanga Yoga" for all-round development of human beings. They are:- Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. These components advocate certain restraints and boservances, physical discipline, breath regulations, restraining the sense organs, contemplation, meditation and samadhi. These steps are believed to have a potential for improvement of physical health by enhancing circulation of oxygenated blood in the body, retraining the sense organs thereby inducing tranquility and serenity of mind. The practice of Yoga prevents psychosomatic.

Although Yoga Practice is essential for self realization, it is also widely used for management of several diseases. Conventional medical management of many conditions is proving to be inadequate and inefficient and, increasingly, medical professionals are happy to try alternative and complementary therapies including Yoga. The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized Yoga as one of several traditional therapeutic systems originates in India.

² www.ccras.nic.in

Several initiatives and measures have been taken by the Government of India and State Governments, to ensure the viability (process of strengthening) by supporting Yoga Institutions, practitioners, Gurus and Yoga aspirants, both technically and financially.

In the present days, Yoga Education is being imparted by many eminent Yoga Institutions, Yoga Colleges, Yoga Universities, Yoga Departments in the Universities, Naturopathy colleges and Private trusts and societies. Many Yoga Clinics, Yoga Therapy and Training Centers, Preventive Health Care Units of Yoga, Yoga Research Centers etc. have been established in Hospitals, Dispensaries, Medical Institutions and Therapetical setups.

On 21 June 2014, the Ministry of AYIUSH celebrated the first ever International Day of Yoga which was celebrated world-wide³.

Naturopathy

Naturopathy is a system of man building in harmony with the constructive principles of Nature on physical, mental, moral and spiritual planes of living. It has great health promotive, disease preventive and curative as well as restorative potential.

According to the manifesto of British Naturopathic Association, "Naturopathy is a system of treatment which recognises the existence of the vital curative force within the body." It therefore, advocates aiding human system to remove the cause of disease i.e. toxins by expelling the unwanted and unused matters from human body for curing diseases.

Unani

The system is holistic in nature and offers preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative healthcare. The thrust areas of Unani medicine are: Chronic Disorders, Psychotic Disorders, Non Communicable and Metabolic Diseases and Immune Modulation etc. like Rheumatoid Arthritis, Jaundice, Nervous Debility, Skin Diseases like Vitiligo and Eczema, Sinusitis and Bronchial Asthma. For the prevention of disease and promotion of health, the Unani system emphasizes six essentials like - (a) Pure Air, (b) Food and Drinking Water (c) Physical Movement and Rest (d) Psychic Movement and Rest (e) Sleep and Wakefulness and (f) Retention of Useful Materials and Evacuation of Waste Materials from

³ PIB dated 9.6.2015

the body. There are four forms of treatment in Unani medicine- Pharmacotherapy, Dietotherapy, Regimental Therapy and Surgery. Regimental therapy is a special technique/ physical method of treatment to improve the constitution of body by removing waste materials and improving the defense mechanism of the body and protect health. Some of the special techniques are Blood-letting, Cupping, Massage, Leeching, Turkish Bath, Exercise, and Cauterization. The Unani system of medicine offers various methods of treatment which are used for specific and complicated diseases. It emphasizes the use of naturally occurring, mostly herbal medicines and also uses some medicines of animal, marine and mineral origin.

The Government of India has taken several steps for the all round development of this system. It passed laws to regulate and promote its education and training. It established research institutions, testing laboratories and standardized regulations for the production of drugs and for its practice. Today the Unani system of medicine with its recognized practitioners, hospitals and educational and research institutions, forms an integral part of the national health care delivery system⁴.

The Govt. of India has established Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) to prevent the misappropriation of patent on Country's traditional medicinal knowledge including different aspects/techniques of Yoga.

Siddha

The Siddha system is one of the oldest systems of medicine in India, it is therapeutic in nature. The Siddha system of Medicine emphasizes on the patient, environment, age, sex, race, habits, mental frame work, habitat, diet, appetite, physical condition, physiological constitution of the diseases for its treatment which is individualistic in nature Diagnosis of diseases are done through examination of pulse, urine, eyes, study of voice, colour of body, tongue and status of the digestion of individual patients. System has unique treasure for the conversion of metals and minerals as drugs and many infective diseases are treated with the medicines containing specially processed mercury, silver, arsenic, lead and sulphur without any side effects. The strength of the Siddha system lies in providing very effective therapy in the case of Psoriasis, Rheumatic disorders, Chronic liver disorders, Benign prostate hypertrophy, bleeding piles, peptic ulcer including various kinds of Dermatological disorders

⁴ www.ccrum.net

of non psoriatic nature⁵. The Ayurveda and Siddha are twin systems of India and have got greater similarities.

Homeopathy

Homeopathy has been recognised as one of the National System of Medicine and plays a very important role in providing health care to a large number of people. Its strength lies in its evident effectiveness as it takes a holistic approach towards the sick individual through promotion of inner balance at mental, emotional, spiritual and physical levels. Homoeopathy simply means treating diseases with remedies, prescribed in minute doses, which are capable of producing symptoms similar to the disease when taken by healthy people. It is based on the natural law of healing⁶.

Homoeopathic medicines are most cost effective, palatable, have no adverse side effects, can be administered easily. In some cases, the medicines can be prescribed on the basis of symptoms of the patients, without depending upon the cumbersome and costly diagnostic modalities. Homoeopathy has been useful in treatment of psychosomatic disorders, autoimmune diseases, geriatric and pediatric disorders, ailments during pregnancy, obstinate skin diseases, life style disorders and allergies, etc. It also has a positive role in improving the quality of life in incurable chronic diseases like cancer, HIV/AIDS, terminally ill patients and incapacitating diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, etc. As such, its popularity is gaining momentum, all over the world⁷

Sowa-Rig-pa (Amchi Medicine):

“Sowa-Rig-pa”, commonly known as Amchi medicine, is the traditional medicine of many parts of the Himalayan region used mainly by the Tribal and bhot people. In India, this system of medicine has been popularly practiced in Ladakh and Paddar-Pangay regions of Jammu and Kashmir, Lahul-spiti, Pangi, Dhramshala and Kinnar region of Himachal Pradesh, Uttrakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Darjeeling-Kalingpong (West Bengal).

The diagnostic techniques in Sowa-Rigpa include visual observation, touch and interrogation. For treatment of health problems, the system makes use of herbs, minerals,

⁵ <http://www.indianmedicine.nic.in/writereaddata/linkimages/6678328715-Introduction-2014.pdf>, p.4

⁶ <http://www.indianmedicine.nic.in/index3.asp?sslid=224andsubsublinkid=69andlang=1>

⁷ <http://ccrindia.org/About%20Homoeopathy.asp>

animal products, spring and mineral water, moxibustion mysticism and spiritual power. The medicines are used usually in the form of decoctions, powders, pills and syrups etc. Mantra and tantra components are also very important of Sowa-rig-pa⁸.

THE NATIONAL POLICY ON INDIAN SYSTEMS OF MEDICINE AND HOMOEOPATHY-2002

The Policy emphasized the need for a meaningful phased integration of Indian Systems of Medicines with the modern medicines, and also outlined the need to secure complete integration of all plans for health and human development, particularly agriculture and food products, rural development, education and social welfare, housing, water supply and sanitation.

The basic objectives of this Policy are :

- (a). To promote good health and expand the outreach of health care to our people through preventive, promotive, mitigating and curative intervention through Indian system of Medicine and Homeopathy (ISMandH).
- (b). To improve the quality of teachers and clinicians by revising curricula to contemporary relevance and researchers by creating model institutions;
- (c). To ensure affordable ISMandH services and drugs which are safe and efficacious
- (d). To facilitate availability of raw drugs which are authentic and contain essential components as required under pharmacopoeial standards;
- (e). Integrate ISMandH in health care delivery system and National Programmes;
- (f). Re-orient and prioritize research in ISMandH;
- (g). Create awareness about the strengths of these systems in India and abroad;
- (h). To provide full opportunity for the growth and development of these systems; etc.

CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEME OF NATIONAL AYUSH MISSION (NAM) AND OTHER MAJOR CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEMES FOR PROMOTION OF AYUSH MEDICAL PRACTICES LIKE AYURVEDA, YOGA AND NATUROPATHY

National AYUSH Mission (NAM)

The Government of India has approved and notified National AYUSH Mission (NAM) on 29 September 2014 which envisages better access to AYUSH services; strengthening of AYUSH educational institutions, facilitate the enforcement of quality control of Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani& Homoeopathy (ASU &H) drugs and sustainable availability of ASU & H raw-materials in the States/UTs during Twelfth Plan.

⁸ <http://www.indianmedicine.nic.in/writereaddata/linkimages/6678328715-Introduction-2014.pdf>, p.7

The new initiatives under NAM include School Health Programme through AYUSH, Public Health outreach activity to focus on increasing awareness about AYUSH strength in managing community health problems, adoption of villages for propagating AYUSH way of life and interventions of health care through AYUSH Gram, early prevention of non-communicable diseases and promotion of health care by way of Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) integrated with the principles and practices of AYUSH systems and Yoga and Naturopathy wellness centres.

Central Sector Scheme for promotion of Information, Education and Communication

The Ministry of AYUSH has been implementing the Central Sector Scheme for promotion of Information, Education and Communication in AYUSH for creation of awareness amongst the masses about the efficacy of the AYUSH systems, their cost-effectiveness and dissemination of proven results or Research and Development work conducted in AYUSH systems.

The Scheme provides for organization of Arogya Fairs both at the National and State Level; participation in Health Fairs/ Melas / Exhibitions organized by Government Departments, State Governments and other reputed Organizations; preparation and distribution of authentic Publicity material on AYUSH Systems including Multi-media/print media campaigns, audio visual materials for popularization of AYUSH Systems; providing financial assistance to reputed organizations, NGOs, educational/ research institutes for organizing Seminars, Conferences, Symposiums, Workshop, meeting, etc. on AYUSH Systems and providing incentives to AYUSH Industry to participate in Arogya and other Fairs/ Melas/ Exhibitions/ Conferences/ Seminars etc.

Central Sector Scheme for “Conservation, Development and Sustainable Management of Medicinal Plants”

The Central Sector Scheme for “Conservation, Development, and Sustainable Management of Medicinal Plants” was approved by Government to provide support for Survey, Inventorization, *in-situ* conservation, *ex-situ* conservation/ herbal gardens, linkage with JFMCs, Research and Development etc. The Scheme is being implemented since 2008 and continued during the Twelfth Plan.

Centre of Excellence Scheme:

The main aim of the scheme is to support creative and innovative proposals for upgrading both functions and facilities of reputed AYUSH institutions to levels of excellence. Both the Government as well as private organizations are eligible under this scheme. Maximum Rs.10.00 Crore is provided to the grantee organization for a period of three years for implementing the scheme.

Public Health Initiatives:

The Ministry of AYUSH is implementing one Central Sector Grant-in Aid Scheme for promotion of AYUSH Intervention in Public Health Initiatives. The main aim of the scheme is to promote AYUSH intervention for community health care and to encourage utilization of AYUSH practitioners in different public health programmes. Both Government as well as private organizations are eligible under this scheme. Maximum Rs.1.50 Crore are provided to the grantee organization for the period of three years for implementing the scheme⁹.

CONCLUSION

AYUSH systems have been an age old tradition with wide acceptance which can play an important role in the prevention and mitigation of diseases. There is a need for service integration by providing the best and unique from each system to patients as a complementary therapy and an alternative choice of treatment. There is an important role for the AYUSH practitioners in the delivery of health services¹⁰.

⁹ PIB dated 3.5.2015

¹⁰ <http://www.indianmedicine.nic.in/writereaddata/linkimages/6678328715-Introduction-2014.pdf>, p. 34