

September 27, 2018

To: WEAMA board and membership committee

From: EAMP, Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM), LAc and/or TCM professionals

Re: Renaming WEAMA

Dear WEAMA board and membership committee,

As WEAMA evolves and matures, we are happy to learn that the WEAMA committee is considering the idea of changing its name. While there are many reasons why the WEAMA committee agrees to do this, a common conclusion drawn from discussion from among us, including EAMPs, TCM college faculty members, licensed acupuncture and TCM professionals, is the need to ensure a meaningful and proper name change that best reflects the mission and scope of WEAMA intend to serve. Many factors go into the proper name, getting it right is crucial. Per survey (via WeChat, meetings and conversations) from EAMPs or practicing acupuncturists throughout Washington State, the preferred names for WEAMA to rename are (1) Washington Traditional Chinese Medicine Association (WTCMA), (2) Washington Acupuncture & Chinese Medicine Association (WACMA) or (3) Washington Acupuncture Medicine Association (WAMA). The main rationales and comments are summarized as below:

Oriental vs. East Asian: the Wrong Ones either can be Offensive

Oriental and East Asian are terms often used synonymously, and the wrong ones unfortunately either can be offensive. The term *Oriental* is often used to describe objects from the Orient; it is generally considered inappropriate to use it to describe people from East Asia, given its Eurocentric connotations and shifting, inaccurate definition through the ages. As such, the term may cause offence. In a 2009 American press release related to legislation aimed at removing the term '*Oriental*' from official documents of the State of New York; in 2016, President Barack Obama signed legislation striking the word '*Oriental*' from federal law; and Washington State prohibits the '*Oriental*' word in legislation and government document. Similarly, although East Asian (東亞) is not inherently negative, it is associated with a time period when Asians had a subordinate status referred to '*Sick Man of East Asia*' (東亞病夫) and '*Great East Asia Co-prosperity*' (大東亞共榮). '*Oriental*' and '*East Asian*' are like the word 'negro', they conjure up an era associated with historical discrimination against China and some other Asian countries so that it is probably better to skip these pejorative and disparaging words, *Oriental* and *East Asian* when used to rename WEAMA.

East Asian Medicine vs. Traditional Chinese Medicine: a Blanket Term can be Inappropriate

East Asian Medicine (EAM) commonly known as TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine or Chinese Medicine) is a blanket term used to delineate various methods of healing practices developed in China, Japan, and Korea, but much of the core theory and philosophy of EAM comes from China. Search from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, the page '*East Asian Medicine*' does not exist. People are unclear what exactly EAM is. The use of EAM in English, as well as in many other languages, is often to refer medicine of Asian origin vs. Western origin. A blanket term which is too generic can cause confusion and it is misleading.

Instead, TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) or CM (Chinese Medicine) is a proper word as to rename WEAMA. Although Chinese medicine professionals emphasize the role of Chinese medicine, while non-Chinese medicine professionals stress the process of internalization, it is well known that TCM is originated from China; it is the broad part of what's considered East Asian Medicine including various forms of herbal medicine, acupuncture, massage (Tui na), exercise (qigong), and dietary therapy. TCM is used widely throughout the United States and the world, acupuncture and all of its related modalities have been employed by and it continues to treat millions of people with a multitude of illnesses. TCM has spread through books, records and legal documents, and direct experience of actual practice. Also, institutionalization of the acupuncture system and the establishment of educational institutions in America show that TCM has surpassed the point of common knowledge, and has grown into a substantial part of American society. Additionally, for the first time, the World Health Organization (WHO) will recognize TCM in its influential global medical compendium. "Chinese medicine is heading for clinics around the world". [*Nature* 561, 448-450 (2018)]

Acupuncture vs. Traditional Chinese Medicine: the Proper Words to Use

Acupuncture is the most popular branch of TCM, gaining the most attention and respect in the world. It is an independent and complete system of medicine. Although Acupuncture practices were not exclusive to China it was from China that it developed greatly and influenced the surrounding islands of Japan and Korea; and thus each country developed its own unique styles of healing based on classical TCM knowledge. People can get confused with TCM/acupuncture vs. Japanese medicine/Japanese-style acupuncture and Korean medicine/Korean-style acupuncture. It would be more confusing for outsiders in the future if more countries create their other style of acupuncture. Regardless of the geographical location (country), the presence of TCM is found to be conducive to the utilization of various EAM modalities. TCM is institutionalized and it affects the extent to which EAM users utilize various EAM modalities together and potentially affects the health promotion of EAM. Therefore, TCM or CM is believed to be a proper word to use for that would cause confusion.

Since acupuncture is part of TCM, saying 'Acupuncture and TCM' or 'Acupuncture and CM' might be redundant and confusing if they were two different entities. Therefore, most people prefer the definition of "Washington Traditional Chinese Medicine Association (WTCMA)" or "Washington Chinese Medicine Association (WCMA)" instead of "Washington Acupuncture & Chinese Medicine Association (WACMA)". However, supporters may find it beneficial to use both Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine as "Acupuncture" may be more inclusive, i. e. including Japanese and Korean acupuncture styles to avoid skirmishes while keeping Traditional Chinese Medicine in its name to identify the origin and to embrace other important components like Chinese Herbal Medicine there is another path: in order to completely avoid skirmishes among China, Japan, Korea and other countries, the third preferred definition is "Washington Acupuncture Medical Association" or "Washington Acupuncture Medical Association (WAMA)".

Overall, we understand that WEAMA is more than just a name; it is the identity of the entire association. We know that changing its name is not simply an internal decision made by board and committee members; it is difficult and time consuming which requires documentations and legal proceedings. But when a name is the face of an association, getting it right is absolutely crucial. We hope that the new name has the level of recognition, avoiding any misperceptions and pejorative words, and properly reflecting the association. We believe that a considerate process between the board and membership committee can help ensure a meaningful and proper name change that best reflects the WEAMA's mission and scope of service.

Sincerely,

WEAMA members and non-members

