Integrative Health Care

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Theme: Integrative Health Care

Intended learning outcomes:

• To understand the concept and significance of integrative healthcare
• To gain insight into potential uses of complementary therapies
• To experience selected complementary therapy practices
Biomedical Health Care

Emerged early 20\textsuperscript{th} century:

• “clinical medicine based on the principles of physiology and biochemistry”
  (1923, cited Kroker 2008)

• Involves a pathogenic process with a specific therapeutic intervention
  (Wallach 2001)

  ‘conventional health care’ (CHC)
Prior to biomedical health care, different cultures depended on their own ‘traditional’ health care:

- Traditional Chinese medicine
- Ayurvedic medicine
- Naturopathy
- Herbalism
• In recent years, many of these traditional practices have gained renewed popularity in western societies
• These practices are collectively termed: Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)
• The therapies used in CAM are known as: Complementary Therapies (CTs)
• CAM includes all types of health care that is not normally available through mainstream health care:
  
  • *Complementary* therapies are used *alongside* conventional health care
  
  • *Alternative* therapies are used *instead of* conventional health care
“… CAM is a broad domain of healing resources … other than those intrinsic to the politically dominant health system of a particular society …”

(Panel on Definition and Description 1997, p.50)
In western societies, CAM generally includes those therapies that:

- cannot be explained in biomedical terms
- Are not normally taught or provided through conventional health care
Examples of CAM 1: SYSTEMS

- Traditional Chinese medicine
- Ayurvedic medicine
- Naturopathy
Examples of CAM 2: THERAPIES

- Aromatherapy
- Therapeutic Touch
- Reflexology
- Meditation
- Shiatsu

- Bach flower remedies
- Massage
- Reiki
- Nutritional Therapy
Examples of CAM 3: THE ‘BIG 5’

The major CAM therapies in the U.K.

- Osteopathy
- Chiropractic
- Herbalism
- Acupuncture
- Homeopathy
For instance, this gin and tonic does not have a single molecule of gin in it!

It's from the staff canteen, right!

Homeopathy
The ideal:
• Interdisciplinary – non-hierarchical – *blends* CAM and CHC
• Collaborative – consensus building – true patient/practitioner partnership
  (Boon et al 2004)

In practice:
• The use of some form of CAM in CHC
‘Proper’ IHC:
- Is truly patient-centred and individualised and has an emphasis on **wellness**

Patient perspective on IHC:
- To improve both health and **wellbeing**
  
  (Little 2007, 2009)
Significance of IHC to CHC

• CAM is increasingly popular with the public
• The reasons for CAM use reflect patient satisfaction with CHC
• Examples of CAM use in CHC are more evident
1. **Popularity**

- Worldwide, CAM use can be as high as 50% (Tiralongo & Wallis 2008)
2. *Reasons* for CAM use:

- CAM perceived as more patient-centred, more holistic, more consistent with patient values and is claimed to ‘fill gaps’ in CHC
  (Grace & Higgs 2010, Little 2009, Barrett et al. 2003)
CAM use in CHC: i) HEALTH

- Pain relief
- Midwifery
- Mental health
- Dentistry

- Mobility
- Palliative care
- Surgery
- Women’s health

(multiple examples in literature)
CAM use in CHC: ii) WELLBEING

• Acute care: massage following CABG
  (Hattan et al. 2002)
• Chronic: acupuncture, MBSR, yoga for back pain
  (Hsu et al. 2010)
• Primary care: herbalism for multiple conditions
  (Little 2009)
WELLBEING:

• Palliative care: wellbeing enhanced through interaction with therapists
  (Nelson 2006)

• Relatives: massage promoted peace of mind
  (Cronfalk et al. 2009)
Important note:

Wellbeing is often NOT captured by commonly used outcome measures

(Hsu et al. 2010)
IHC: The Future

- IHC is already appearing in medical and nursing curricula
- Best advanced through interprofessional education (Willison 2008)
- IHC centres are appearing
- Evaluative studies beginning to emerge (outcome measures?)
IHC: Possibilities for ‘integrating’ CAM and CHC

- CAM as an add-on
- Co-existence as competing paradigm
- ‘Happy’ co-existence
- Melting pot

Biomedical dominance
Medical pluralism
Integrative health care
Your challenge:

Consider the possibilities for CAM:
• In your own professional field
• In a multidisciplinary context
HERBALISM
Hold up guys! I need to harvest this for my thyme ball powder!


