



WISCONSIN SOCIETY OF CERTIFIED ACUPUNCTURISTS

Wisconsin Society of Certified Acupuncturists (WISCA) is the state's largest and oldest professional acupuncture organization, established in 1999.

WISCA promotes and protects the practice of Acupuncture and East Asian Medicine in Wisconsin. We increase understanding of our medicine through education, advocacy, and service. Our collaboration among members, allied health providers, legislators and the public strengthens our profession and benefits the public health.

- Certified Acupuncturists in Wisconsin graduate from accredited schools requiring at least 1900 hours of training (a majority of acupuncturists graduate with a master's degree). All pass national exams established by the National Certification Commission of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM).
- Wisconsin has certified 951 acupuncturists and the profession is a growing sector of business in our state. New graduates and established Acupuncturists who relocate to Wisconsin are small business owners, employees of managed health care systems and members of corporate wellness programs across the state.

Acupuncture and East Asian Medicine (EAM) is increasingly sought after by the public as an adjunct to conventional medical care. Research and clinical evidence continue to validate treatment as a safe, evidence based, and cost-effective approach to health care.

- The World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Institutes of Health recognize the effectiveness of acupuncture based on data from controlled clinical trials for the management of numerous types of pain. Mechanisms of action for acupuncture have been described and are understandable from biomedical, physiologic perspectives.
- Acupuncture and EAM is recognized as an important compliment to conventional medical care in the state and is offered by the following institutions: UW Hospital and Clinics, Aurora Health Care, the VA, and others. While Wisconsin does not require coverage of Acupuncture and EAM, many companies, such as Aetna, Cigna, Anthem BCBS, The Alliance, Dean, Group Health Cooperative, and Physicians Plus choose to offer this benefit to insured.

The United States is facing a national opioid epidemic and is in need of non-pharmacologic strategies that can be employed to decrease the public's opioid dependence. Acupuncture has emerged as a powerful, evidence-based, safe, cost-effective, and available treatment modality suitable to meeting this need.

- Acupuncture's cost-effectiveness could dramatically decrease health care expenditures, both from the standpoint of treating acute pain and through avoiding the development of opioid addiction that requires costly care, destroys quality of life, and can lead to fatal overdose.
- National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG), sent an open letter to the CEO of the America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) to request it encourage its member insurance companies to revise their payment and coverage policies to encourage providers to prioritize non-opioid treatment options for chronic, non cancer pain: "When patients seek treatment for any of the myriad conditions that cause chronic pain, doctors should be encouraged to explore and prescribe effective non-opioid alternatives, ranging from non-opioid medications (such as NSAIDs) to physical therapy, acupuncture, massage, and chiropractic care."
- Numerous federal regulatory agencies have advised or mandated that healthcare systems and providers offer non-pharmacologic treatment options, and acupuncture stands as the most evidence-based, immediately available choice to fulfill these calls. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that non-pharmacological therapies, including acupuncture, can ameliorate chronic pain, as part of the CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain, 2006.