Needs and Attitudes of Citizens

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Attitudes and needs regarding CAM among EU citizens

Aims

• To identify stakeholders and indicators for needs for CAM
• To establish an overview of needs and attitudes towards CAM in Europe

Methods

• Stakeholder workshop
• Literature review
A workshop with stakeholders

Participating stakeholders

• Croatian Federation of Natural, Energy and Spiritual Medicine, Croatia
• Danish Consumer Council, Denmark
• Riga Stradins University, Latvia
• Tuscan General Directorate of Health, Tuscany, Italy

Aims of the workshop

• To identify how to explore citizens’ attitudes and needs to CAM
• To facilitate the sharing of relevant sources of information about CAM across the EU
• To help identify how citizens’ attitudes and needs to CAM can be measured and compared across the EU countries
A workshop with stakeholders

Decision on prioritized areas of enquiry

• Independent and easily accessible information about CAM, based on available evidence to support informed decision making

• Quality of care, comprising services, practitioners and products

• Equal access to services, including considerations of geographical distance to services, waiting times and costs/reimbursements

After the workshop: Collection of names and contact points for additional stakeholders; the list was later given to the WP8 (Communication)
A systematic review of research based literature

Transforming the prioritized areas into a systematic literature search strategy

• **Search terms** - Synonyms for *citizen*, *need*, and *attitude* + CAM + Europe
  Additional keywords identified during the search

• **Major databases** - Pubmed, Web of Science, CINHAL, AMED, PsycINFO

• **189 papers** were included
  150 reporting on quantitative studies
  36 reporting on qualitative studies
  2 systematic reviews
Numbers indicate number of articles.
Information about CAM: Needs and attitudes

Citizens’ main sources of information

- Social networks, often based on personal experience
- Biomedical professionals
- Print and broadcast media

Spectrum of disclosure of CAM use to biomedical professionals

- A spectrum of disclosure from very low to high
- Depending on the MDs practice of and attitude to CAM
Citizens’ comments:

… you talk to people who you respect … and then you ask them. You talk to as many people different people; well, I would talk to as many different people as I possibly could …. (Holt et al 2009: 227; UK)

… oh well the bush telegraph I mean is better than the internet really (Evans et al 2007: online publication; UK)
Access to CAM: Needs and attitudes

Citizens express a need for

- Increased CAM provision
- Provision of CAM in public health services
- Diversity of CAM provision and providers
- More research into CAM

Citizens experience barriers of

- Financial costs
- Biomedical professionals’ attitudes to CAM
- Limited CAM provision, and provision of particular CAMs only in public health service
Citizens’ comments:

It [acupuncture] was on my mind for some years, but it was too expensive when I was a student. But when the health insurance started covering the fees, I told myself: ‘I’ll give it a go!’ because even if it doesn’t help, I don’t lose that much money. Then I grabbed the yellow pages and he (patient’s acupuncturist) was the closest to where I live. (Frank and Stollberg 2004: 361; Germany)
Quality of Care: Needs and attitudes

Citizens value certain aspects of the practice of CAM

- The CAM provider-patient relationship
- The approach underpinning CAM practice, such as person-centred care, personal involvement in care
- CAM is perceived to be safer than biomedicine

Citizens ensure quality and safety of CAM provision and products through

- Use of diverse strategies: such as experiences from social network, professional registration and CAM qualification
- Reliance on regulatory systems and biomedical endorsement
Citizens’ comments:

“They look at a person, they do not look at a certain diagnosis that is only a small part of the whole body” (la Cour 2008: 334; Denmark)
Conclusions from the literature review

Citizens’ core attitudes and needs regarding CAM

• CAM is seen to consider ‘the whole person’ and to be safer than biomedicine

• Availability of impartial, reliable and trustworthy information about CAM

• Wider access to and choice of CAM provision and providers within public health care

• Clear regulatory and educational frameworks of CAM