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Introduction

Complementary therapies have now reached at a stage where they can be used as an important part of health care and wellbeing, it can provide a holistic complement to health care. Historically, complementary therapies have been used for centuries around the world in non-Western parts of the world however, there is now a growing increase in usage of these therapies in Western countries, like the United Kingdom's National Health Service(NHS) does provide somewhat access to certain therapy e.g., acupuncture. In this report, I will explore the role of complementary therapies in health and social care and the effectiveness of support they may provide in maintaining health and wellbeing alongside traditional medicine. The aim of this report will focus on Acupuncture, I will go into understanding the principles behind the current use of complementary therapy in Acupuncture and see the role of complementary therapies in relation and comparison to orthodox treatments. Going forward on to analysing and evaluating the systems for regulating the use of acupuncture therapy, questioning can acupuncture potentially enhance current orthodox treatment.

History of Acupuncture

Acupuncture started in china in the seventeenth centuries from there the research institutes was established. From 1950s throughout China acupuncture treatments had become available in different sections of acupuncture treatments. During that same period scientific evidence explained the theory of acupuncture. This form of treatment had spread to many other neighbouring countries such as Korea and Japan who have and are still using acupuncture as a form of treatment along with western medicine. In the west France was the first country to recognise and adopted this therapy in support with orthodox treatment. A little while after acupuncture therapy was recognised in the United States of America when the NHI who are the primary agency of health in the states had reported that there is positive evidence in acupuncture for its effectiveness, in certain conditions acupuncture is believed to stimulate the central nervous system, which then releases chemicals into the muscles, spinal cord and brain from there the biochemical changes might stimulate the body's natural healing potentials and promote physical and emotional wellbeing. The traditional theories of acupuncture have been challenged in the West, but evidence of clinical effectiveness is also still elusive for many conditions such as chronic pain but in the last decade of the twentieth century systematic reviews have provided more reliable evidence of acupuncture's value in treating nausea from various causes, dental pain, back pain, and headache. (Rheumatology,2021)

Efficacy of Acupuncture

Some research in cancer patients has put light on the fact that acupuncture looks like it is stimulating the nerves as it releases natural morphine-like substances known as endorphins in your spinal cord and brain accepts it as pain relief. It is also said to release serotonin which is a pain reliever and can give the feeling of comfort. The release of these substances can reduce cancer symptoms, cancer patients might have acupuncture to help sickness due to chemotherapy or other cancer medication they may be on. Acupuncture can be available in hospitals, hospices, and clinics, doctors might and can refer you to have acupuncture done for indications like tiredness and weakness, breathlessness, hot flushes due to anti-cancer treatments acupuncture helps to feel relaxed, and it improves their feelings of comfortableness. However, there is no evidence to show that acupuncture can help treat or cure cancer, saying that it can help relieve some cancer symptoms and side effects from treatment. Studies have shown that acupuncture is beneficial than no treatment at all. Due to studies in people with cancer are often small, it is difficult to be accurate entirely of the results. Comparisons of any evidence that acupuncture might help with standard treatment are helpful to understand how it can work alongside conventional treatment therefore larger and well-designed studies need to be done to learn more (Rizqi, 2020).

In the year 1998, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced that there is enough evidence to show that acupuncture had beneficial pain-relieving qualities in adults experiencing postoperative dental pain, as well as nausea from chemotherapy. Acupuncture might be useful as a treatment for low back pain, as well as many other conditions, such as headache, myofascial pain, osteoarthritis, and carpal tunnel syndrome (Zanardi, 2021).

Contraindications and comparison to traditional treatments

In certain circumstances, acupuncture becomes a contradiction such as If you have a bleeding disorder e.g., haemophiliac, or are taking anticoagulants, talking to your GP beforehand and informing the practitioner is necessary. Patients who may have a metal allergy or an infection in the area where needles may be inserted. It can be generally safe to have acupuncture if patient is pregnant, however, this needs to be addressed before sessions (Acupuncture - NHS, 2021).

Acupuncture practitioners categorise contradictions into different sections such as Absolute Contraindications, Relative Contraindications, and Special Precautions. If you fall in the group of absolute contradiction it means you cannot have acupuncture performed on you. Conditions of uncontrolled movements, oedematous limb at risk of lymphoedema also areas of spinal instability whereas the result relaxation of the surrounding muscles could potentially give rise to spinal cord compression. Recent incisional wounds or skin with a sensory deficit. Patients on anticoagulant therapy or is a haemophiliac, depending on which category you fall in measures will be taken along with correct methods and then acupuncture will be performed (Acupuncture contraindications, 2021).

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has recognised acupuncture to be beneficial for migraines, headaches, tension, and lower back pain and provides guidelines however, the National Health Service (NHS) stated that there is no clear evidence on the effectiveness of

acupuncture compared to traditional orthodox treatment (Acupuncture - NHS, 2021). Comparison to traditional treatment is that there are certain similarities such as understanding patient's dignity and

respecting privacy, the legal duty of being treated equally, and confidential protection of all clients to be met. Practitioners need to indicate that there may be side effects, this treatment may or may not work, it is only a complementary treatment and will not cure or give any diagnoses. Patients need to do their research and also understand the risks and benefits that come with this therapy.

Evaluating the overall effectiveness of the therapy

The effectiveness of Acupuncture patients stands out for having different chronicle medical history they were patients who were not satisfied with their GP and do not have much confidence in prescribed medication. They aimed in having a healthy lifestyle. The patients were hesitant about orthodox medicine, the findings were that patients of complementary practitioners do have different views on GPs, healthy lifestyle, they tend not trust prescribed drugs, lack of faith in medical science, the importance of a healthy mind, they believed it has harmful effects of medical science, and scientific methodology. Results prove that patients consult different practitioners, general or alternative, based on a combination of their level of uncertainty about traditional medicine and other health beliefs. Acupuncture patients trusted less in the scientific basis of medicine and believed that it has harmful effects on the body, patients tended to believe in the efficacy that therapy may cure major, minor, chronic, and psychological problems. The efficacy of this therapy was associated with the belief of the importance of psychological factors related to illness and connections of harmful side effects of traditional medicine (Furnham, Vincent, Wood, 2021).

Acupuncture when performed is when certain insertion points are made to restoring the central nervous system which then releases chemicals into the muscles, spinal cord, and brain. These substances modify and stimulate the body's natural healing possibilities to support the physical and emotional aspect (Acupuncture, 2021).

Conclusion

This report has presented the facts that Acupuncture is still being questioned on how effective and supported it may be the question remains unanswered due to not enough testing or research been done. However, it is recognised by big organisations such as the National Health Service (NHS) and The National Institute for Health Care Excellence (NICE) who have advised to discuss and update your general practitioner (GP) if one is thinking about using such therapies. By involving your GP, on some occasions, they may be able to refer you or recommend certain therapist or companies who are covered in the legal department which will benefit you if something was to go the wrong way. Complementary therapies are a holistic understanding to health care. We have now just about enough scientific evidence to support the efficacy of acupuncture however, there is still much work to be done in this area so that healthcare institutions can start to accept them as a normal part of the healthcare system.

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