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Introduction

Complementary and alternative therapy has been drastically developing in the 21st century. Complementary therapies are a collection of different health care treatments and exercises that are not included in conventional medicine, including the biomedicine conducted by physicians and allied health professionals like psychologists, therapists, and authorized nurses. The complementary and alternative therapies are in particular categories. They include natural products (dietary supplements, herbal medicines, and probiotics), mind-body medicine (meditation, acupuncture, hypnotherapy, yoga, deep-breathing practices, tai chi, and progressive relaxation), and manipulative practices (massage therapy and spinal manipulation). Additionally, other methods include energy therapies, homeopathy, and naturopathy. The complementary therapies are currently in comprehensive utilization in treating various patients. By conducting an overview of some of the therapies, acupuncture is a treatment that involves utilizing thin needles to cause stimulations in certain body parts. It mainly causes changes in the connective tissues around the bones and muscles. Acupuncture helps to relieve pain in patients. Yoga involves breathing exercises, relaxation techniques, meditation, and various poses that stretch several body muscles. Yoga reduces fatigue and improves the flexibility to conduct multiple daily activities. Tai chi is a therapy that involves breathing regulation and mind-calming to enhance the quality of life. Meditation helps to improve the focus of the mind and body relaxation. It helps to reduce stress and improve moods. Massage practices bring substantial comfort to the body and enhance body relaxation, which helps to reduce anxiety and depression.

Due to the increase in the utilization of complementary therapies, many health care providers adopted the practices and conducted the treatments without authorization. Therefore, there was an increased need to form regulatory bodies that would enhance the protection of the public and adherence to the guidelines. There are two complementary therapies under statutory self-regulation that is chiropractic and osteopathy. The statutory self-regulation is currently in charge of ensuring qualified practitioners conduct the treatments and the set standards are adhered to effectively. However, the practitioners have self-regulation practices that guide them; self-regulation is essential for the practitioners. The voluntary self-regulation systems help them have proper guidance of the exercises and ensure effectiveness in treating patients to achieve patient satisfaction. This report aims to provide a brief history of acupuncture therapy, the uses and benefits of the treatment, the regulating systems, and the principles guiding the practitioners.

The History of Acupuncture

The initial practice of the therapy was in China. It was first realized and recorded a century before the current era. For the efficiency of the acupuncture treatment, long sharp bones and sharpened stones were used instead of thin needles during the time, around 6000BCE. The instruments were also used in simple surgical protocols. The origin of the acupuncture concept believed that energy flows in the body and that the energy can be transferred to develop a balance of energy and health. The energy flow was known as “chee”. The acupuncture concept believes that the energy flow travels through the body in 12 main paths known as **meridians** (Cheng & Lin, 2018). The main paths represent various essential organs with their functions in the body. However, the paths do not follow the same blood flow channels or nerves. The earliest recordings of acupuncture treatment procedures were found in “*The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine*,” which was determined to be from 100BCE.

The practice of acupuncture became widely spread a few centuries after the realization and was one of the common treatments in China. The treatment was complemented by utilizing heat therapy, herbs, and massage (Engelbreton, 2002). The utilization of acupuncture treatment declined after the 16th century; it was considered unreasonable and mixed with falsities. Acupuncture treatment was excluded from the Imperial Medical Institute in 1822, although the local healers and several scholars retained the knowledge of the therapy. In the 20th century, there was a rise in Western medicine experienced; this led to the further declination of acupuncture treatment (Cheng & Lin, 2018). In 1929, acupuncture therapy and other traditional treatments were outlawed. The Communist Government revived all the outlawed therapies. This led to the establishment of acupuncture research institutes all over China in 1950; therefore, the treatment became available in various hospitals in the nation. The practice was widely spread to reach neighboring countries such as Japan and Korea. Within the initial years of the 19th century, the ancient treatment captured the attention of both Britain and America for incorporation of treatment in health care organizations. The treatment was witnessed to be effective when a member of the US press group recovered from an emergency appendectomy due to the implementation of acupuncture therapy. The US press-member was treated in China when he visited the country. The treatment experience through the therapy created a massive interest in the therapy in many countries (Cheng & Lin, 2018). Therefore, after several positive responses to the therapy's effectiveness, acupuncture treatment was eventually accepted in the US. The traditional concepts of acupuncture have highly been challenged in the West, especially in the US and UK. Due to the concept of the neurological model, there have been contradictions in the belief of traditional concepts of energy flow in

meridians and its relevance. However, the evidence of acupuncture treatment in chronic pains influenced the belief and adoption of the therapy in care operations in the West.

Uses of Acupuncture

In the health care system, acupuncture has several uses to assist in recovery and improve the well-being of a patient. The treatment involves the insertion of thin needles by practitioners in different parts of the body and in varying depths to treat various health problems. Acupuncture is used to relieve pain in patients. It helps to reduce vomiting and nausea induced by chemotherapy. Acupuncture therapy helps to reduce the emotional and physical impacts on patients. Many practitioners prefer acupuncture treatment because it helps to advance the quality of life of individuals in several ways. The treatment helps to reduce stress levels. The issue of stress is one of the factors that influence people to seek acupuncture treatment. Stress developed from the workplace, or personal challenges can be minimized or completely treated by acupuncture treatment. Various people have witnessed the therapy to reduce the stress hormones and regulate moods (Pan et al., 2018). Therefore, acupuncture tends to improve the overall emotions of someone by minimizing their anxiety levels. Acupuncture therapy is known to treat eye-straining associated with neck pains and causes relief to the body. Various deficiencies such as short-sightedness, night blindness, astigmatism, cataract, color blindness, and long-sightedness can be treated by acupuncture treatment.

Acupuncture treatment assists in minimizing the physical pains that may be encountered due to vigorous activities. Physical pains such as neck pain, back pain, and joint pains in either hands or arms can be reduced and cause relief in the body through acupuncture treatment. Various activities lead to such pains in the body, such as carrying heavy backpacks that cause back pain and poor postures that cause neck pains and joint pains (Noori-Zadeh et al., 2019). The treatment enables recovery and relief in the body without consuming drugs. Additionally, it minimizes inflammation and swelling of the paining body parts (Fuggle et al., 2018). Acupuncture also treats and causes relief from headaches; it has been utilized to treat headaches for a long time. Acupuncture treatment has been a preferred therapy since it does not involve penetration of the body; it does not cause much pain during treatment and does not involve the use of drugs.

Acupuncture treatment improves the immune system and prevents someone from getting sick often. Through acupuncture treatment, the body's immune system is boosted due to assistance in fighting pathogens (Deng et al., 2018). This treatment also helps one overcome the debilitating symptoms that make people lazy or despondent to attend to various chores effectively. The treatment also assists in relieving one digestive condition. The relationship

between the overall health and the digestive condition is inevitable; they should be treated to ensure efficient operations of the body functions. Therefore, acupuncture treatment can be used to control the digestive system to prevent abnormal conditions, hence improving the body's functioning. Acupuncture treatment enhances mental clarity and boosts energy. Various patients have reported their mental clarity enhancement and an encounter of boosted energy after the treatment. The therapy improves sleep, hence regarded as a cure for insomnia.

Acupuncture is used to relieve allergy infections. It is a major element in preventing allergies but essentially strengthens the body before allergy seasons. Acupuncture can also minimize allergy symptoms; hence it is known to cause relief from allergy infections. Acupuncture therapy is known to assist individuals on the road to quitting cigarette consumption. It assists individuals in reducing their addiction to smoking.

Additionally, it helps to improve lung tissue repair and enhance detoxification in the body (Zhao et al., 2019). Due to relieving stress by acupuncture treatment, one can have less injury to the body. This therapy helps to reduce the effect of repetitive stress from strenuous activities that lead to surgeries or drug consumption. Acupuncture treatment can be combined with various therapies to treat health problems like migraine, fatigue, peripheral neuropathy, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Efficacy and Contraindications

There are many reports and results from researchers on the effectiveness of the therapy in providing patient satisfaction. Acupuncture therapy has been known to reduce various forms of pain which may be chronic and affect normal body functioning, such as neck pain, osteoarthritis, and back pain. It helps to reduce and prevent frequent headaches. The therapy has been preferred by most patients who experience chronic pains (Li et al., 2019). Most clinical practitioners also offer recommendations on acupuncture treatment. The benefits of acupuncture treatment are stated to significantly affect the brain and the body, hence improving the body's functioning and quality of life. Research has shown that acupuncture greatly stimulates the discharge of natural body painkillers and positively impacts the brain parts involved in processing operations. The typical acupuncture treatment program is known to include 3-10 sessions, each session lasting one hour. Although it is not common, acupuncture therapy is protected by medical insurance. The treatment costs are usually discussed by the acupuncturist, the patient, and the insurance company before the therapy. There are various contraindications in acupuncture treatment, like any other medical treatment. The contraindications include alcohol or any drug intoxication, a seizure order, infections, skin disease, utilization of a pacemaker, utilization of blood thinners or bleeding disorders, and

needling in the stomach area of pregnant women is not advised, and acupuncture that may lead to abortion should also be avoided.

In comparison to other traditional therapies, acupuncture therapy is considered more effective and safe since it does not involve vigorous activities and penetration of the body. Like the other complementary therapies, Acupuncture provides satisfactory relief to the patients. It differs from the other traditional therapies in the use of needles; most the traditional therapies involve physical activities, unlike the acupuncture treatment.

Evaluation of the self-regulatory systems

The statutory self-regulation involves a single controlling body. The concerned body offers effective and efficient training courses concerning the treatments to improve efficiency and patient satisfaction. The statutory self-regulation system is an important body in the industry since it involves high-quality operations standards; this improves the results of the complementary therapy practices (Ijaz & Boon, 2018). The voluntary self-regulation system involves several complementary practitioners. Care practitioners utilizing complementary therapies operate under appropriate elements for effectiveness. Self-regulation involves planning and decision-making of guidelines by several stakeholders in the industry (Cloatre & Ramas, 2019). The voluntary self-regulation body consists of professionals of the complementary therapies; this portrays significant results in the practices of the complementary therapies since there will be proper and effective guidance in the practices with great consideration in the adherence to the operating standards.

Ethical Considerations

The practice of complementary therapies involves several ethical principles that should be adopted to enhance and maintain the efficiency of the treatments to improve patient satisfaction. The ethical principles greatly assist in guiding the actions of the practitioners. They also provide the practitioners with solutions to various challenges and prove moral actions. The complementary therapy practitioners must follow, understand and effectively implement the principles. The major ethical principle guiding the practitioners is respect; all the stakeholders in the health care industry practice respect in their operations; the practitioners should offer respect to all the patients they encounter and value their rights. The following ethical principles are used in the practice of complementary therapy. **Autonomy**, this principle guides the practitioner to allow the patient's freedom to show respect to the patients and their decisions (Taylor, 2018). This principle indicates the freedom to formulate decisions that affects one's life. The practitioners are not supposed to deny patients their freedom because it degrades their value as humans. This ethical issue suggests that patients should have freedom in deciding

what treatment would be best for them or her depending on the benefits and the illness. For proper decision-making, the patient should be informed about the treatment, its benefits, and its side effects. The practitioners are also supposed to protect the patient from any harm, especially to poor patients in decision making. **Non-maleficence** is another principle that implies no harm should be done to the patient by the practitioner. Another principle is **veracity** which implies that patients should be told the truth about the treatment and be provided with treatments that have fewer effects on their bodies (Taylor, 2018). **Justice** is another principle that guides practitioners to practice equitable and fair treatment of the patients. Justice involves conducting fair and equitable operations in distributing benefits and burdens in society. Therefore, the principle guides practitioners in treating patients in similar situations with methods.

Recommendations

Acupuncture treatment is a very effective therapy for patients with chronic pains. Since it involves the use of needles, there should be regular assessment of the resources used in the treatment to ensure proper hygiene in the operations and avoid infections. There should be training institutions concerning the therapy to enhance the effectiveness and ensure similar protocols and standards of the operations are adhered to in every setting. Complementary therapies have not yet been fully adopted and practiced in health care organizations. However, some parts, such as the US and UK, have a minimal percentage of practices on the complementary treatments. The public should be made aware of the complementary treatments to enable them to make proper decisions concerning their health problems before treatment. There should be set guidelines and regulations concerning the treatment activities to ensure quality services of the treatment are maintained to enhance customer satisfaction.

Conclusion

This report provides information about acupuncture treatment. The history, benefits, and regulating systems are discussed to comprehend the treatment. The origin of the acupuncture concept believed that energy flows in the body and that the energy can be transferred to develop a balance of energy and health. Acupuncture helps to relieve pain in patients. Within the initial years of the 19th century, the ancient treatment captured the attention of both Britain and America for incorporation of treatment in health care organizations. Many practitioners prefer acupuncture treatment because it helps to advance the quality of life of individuals in several ways. Acupuncture therapy is known to treat eye-straining associated with neck pains and causes relief to the body. The contraindications include alcohol or any drug intoxication, a seizure order, infections, skin disease, and utilization of a pacemaker. Non-maleficence is one

of the principles that guide the practitioners; it implies that no practitioner should harm the patient. The statutory self-regulation is currently in charge of ensuring qualified practitioners conduct the treatments and the set standards are adhered to effectively. The public should be made aware of the complementary treatments to enable them to make proper decisions concerning their health problems before treatment.

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