

The 2nd International Conference on Culture, Education and Economic Development of Modern Society (ICCESE 2018)

# Analysis on Family Doctors' Health Service of Traditional Chinese Medicine\*

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Abstract—It is expected that China will basically achieve full coverage of family doctors in 2020. TCM as unique medical resources of China, which have unique advantages in the provision of preventive health care and health management. Under the social background of the comprehensive promotion of the family doctor's signing service, TCM combined with the development of family doctor's contract responsibility service, it can not only realize the integration of medical resources, improve the level of primary medical service, but also provide an unprecedented development opportunity for TCM.

Keywords—TCM; family doctor; physician health service

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The family physician system is the service mode of providing basic medical care, public health and agreed health management to the family and each member in the form of contract service [1]. The family doctor system is carried out in more than 50 countries around the world. China is expected to achieve full coverage basically of family doctors in 2020. The effective promotion of the contracted service of the family doctor can promote the level of the basic medical service, perfect the medical service system in China, and it is advantageous to the basic medical and health management. TCM provides family doctor services to meet the needs of Chinese family health management, to provide more personalized diagnosis and treatment services, but the TCM is facing the shortage of talents, the problem of uneven distribution of resources and so on. The advantages, disadvantages, current situation, difficulties and solutions of family doctors in traditional Chinese medicine are analyzed.

# II. ADVANTAGES OF TCM FAMILY PHYSICIAN HEALTH SERVICES

A. Diagnosis and Treatment of TCM with Preventive Health Care, Promote the Combination of Medical and Nursing

Family doctors are working for the purpose of maintaining health, according to the latest statistics from National Health and Family Planning Commission of the People's Republic of China, chronic disease patients have more than 2.6 billion in China, the medical burden caused by chronic diseases accounts for nearly 70% of the burden of the total disease, for instance, the direct medical expenditure caused by diabetes accounts for 13% of the country's total medical expenditure, reaching 173 billion 400 million RMB [2]. Modern medicine is ineffective in treating chronic diseases or is expensive to treat, so it is not possible to promote modern treatments for chronic diseases in family doctor services. The current practice of dealing with chronic diseases is to preventive health care, the theory that do not treat the disease, but preventive treatment of disease is the theoretical basis of TCM preventive health care, and summarizes the tune of moderate work, reasonable diet, cautious living and so on, and the low price of disease prevention and treatment of TCM, the high operation availability and good mass Foundation.

Under the background of the aggravation of population aging in our country, "medical and nursing combination" will be the trend of the old-age pattern, the advantages of traditional Chinese medicine in "medicine" is reflected in the treatment of senile diseases. Through TCM, acupuncture, physical therapy, massage and other methods, we can achieve the purpose of eliminating diseases and health rehabilitation. Health regimen is the Chinese unique advantages, in the thousands of years of tradition in the formation of the theoretical system of comprehensive cultivation, summarizes the diet, acupuncture, massage, medication and other treatment methods, traditional Chinese medicine service in the pension more can improve the quality of medical support combined with, enhance the level of its development.

#### B. Personalized Services Are More Useful for Work

Family physicians to provide health management services mainly aimed at the health status and needs of residents, the development of different types of personalized service programs. The diagnosis and treatment path of modern western medicine is insufficient for the difference of individual diseases and individual differences, and it is based on the results of the examination. The diagnosis and treatment services are provided under the same treatment principle. Each person's physique, psychology and living environment are different, the patient suffers from the same disease to have the different clinical characteristic, there will

<sup>\*</sup> This is the stage result of Hubei University of Chinese medicine in 2015 "Green Plan" project.



also be different responses to the same treatment programmed.

The most representative of the elderly, because of the perennial life habits and psychological factors leading to individual differences in the elderly, the greater the individual differences, the more urgent the need for personalized diagnosis and treatment programs. TCM diagnosis and treatment emphasizes the holistic concept of human and nature, from group therapy to individual treatment, to improve patients 'approval degree, to guide patients to seek health counseling and health service demand, to enhance patients 'sense of gain, and help the development of family doctor Service.

### C. Promoting Physician-patient Relationships

The relationship between doctor and patient is influenced by cognitive tendency and has certain emotional experience, at the same time, under the influence of group background, social culture and other factors, the doctor-patient relationship in different group background and social environment presents different state, China's doctor-patient relationship must have Chinese characteristics, and good doctor-patient relationship has a significant positive effect on the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. It can also improve patient satisfaction.

TCM as the essence of Chinese traditional culture is able to communicate well with doctors and patients in the same culture system. The process of "watching" "sniffing", "asking", and "feeling the pulse " have raised the degree of participation of the patients. Doctors can not only monitor patients body function, physical quality systematically and can learn about the patients' living conditions, social relations and other information, can start from the patients to explore the disease, increase the doctor and the patient's ideological exchange, this type of participatory physician-patient relationship can help doctors to gain trust in patients, improve patient satisfaction, and promote physician-patient relationship.

### III. PROBLEMS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TCM FAMILY DOCTORS IN CHINA

# A. Insufficient Resources for Chinese Medicine, Uneven Distribution of Resources

According to the "Statistical bulletin on the development of health and family planning of China in 2016", the total number of patients who have treaded by TCM reached 960 million, growth 5.8% than 2015, the rate of growth is higher than that of the total number of medical and health institutions in China by 2.7%, TCM services accounted for the total amount of medical services 15.8%, the total of medical and health personnel up to 61.3million, growth the previous year 5.6% over, but the proportion of TCM health service personnel is still low, as shown in the table below. There are 2.21 medical (assistant) doctors per thousand people in 2015, and the number of doctors per 10,000 Chinese practitioners (assistant) is only 3.35, the bottleneck of Chinese medicine talents has become the main problem to

curb the development of Chinese medicine. If cannot effectively solve the problem of training Chinese medicine practitioners, Chinese Medicine family doctor service will be an empty talk.

The distribution of traditional Chinese medicine resources is uneven, and the insufficiency of Chinese medicine resources has resulted in most of Chinese medicine resources concentrated in the big cities rather than the primary medical institutions. In 2016, the number of patients in TCM hospitals accounted for 59.93 % of the total number of visits, while TCM clinics accounted for only 13.01%.

The concentration of TCM resources in big cities is not conducive to the development of itself, and it is contrary to the purpose of improving the quality of medical service and improving the accessibility of medical services in the grassroots community.

TABLE I. THE NUMBER OF TCM WORKERS IN CHINA

|  | In 2015      | In 2016 |
|--|--------------|---------|
| Total number of workers of TCM (million) | 58.0         | 61.3    |
| Doctor(Assistant) of TCM(Assistant)      | 45.2         | 48.2    |
| Probationary TCM Practitioner            | 1.4          | 1.4     |
| Chinese Medicine Division (SHI)          | 11.4         | 11.7    |
| The percentage of TCM worker in the same | category (%) |         |
| Doctor(Assistant) of TCM(Assistant)      | 14.9         | 15.1    |
| Probationary TCM Practitioner            | 6.4          | 6.6     |
| Chinese Medicine Division (SHI)          | 26.9         | 26.6    |

a. The table is from National Health and Family Planning Commission of the People's Republic of China "Statistical bulletin on the development of health and family planning of China in 2016"

### B. The Limitations of Basic Chinese Medicine Services, Patient Health Information Is Not Interoperable

According to the "Notice on the issuance and promotion of guidance on signing service for family doctors", the main body of the contract of the family physician is the registered general practitioner of the Medical and Health Organization (including the assistant general practitioner and the general practitioner of TCM category), as well as the competent township health care physician and the village doctor. In principle, the family doctor should take the form of Team service, the majority of doctors in the basic level of Chinese medicine are self-employed Chinese medicine clinics, to achieve the form of Team Services must be across the unit combination, team staffing, fund allocation, performance appraisal and other challenges.

At the end of 2016, the Community Health Service center providing Chinese medicine services is the same kind of organization's 97.5%, Community Health service station 83.3%, Township Hospital is the 94.3%, and the village health Room occupies 62.8% <sup>[3]</sup>. The number of primary medical institutions providing Chinese medicine services has steadily increased, but the level of Chinese medicine in primary medical institutions is not enough and the levels are uneven. To the grass-roots village Health Room The most prominent problem, providing Western medical treatment services for the rural doctors, after training can carry out the medical treatment business, and follow-up



training, excessive pursuit of the provision of traditional Chinese medicine service institutions but despise the level of service.

At present, the health records and medical information of patients are not shared between different medical institutions, which reduce the level of health service, family doctors to provide patients with health counseling and other services based on a full understanding of patient health information. Patient records in different medical institutions cannot be shared; lack of health information may reduce the accuracy of diagnosis which will reduce the quality of service.

### C. The Change in the Concept of Medical Treatment Is Difficult, Chinese Medicine Service Acceptance Is Not High Enough

The patient's treatment idea is to improve the basic medical service quality of key factors that influence people's grassroots medical institutions to provide medical services limited understanding, see the doctor first, choose a big hospital make residents benefit project did not play the role of benefiting the public. The changes in the doctor's service model are impacting traditional medical attitudes, and the family doctors' team is not easy to be welcomed by the family and is often rejected. Family doctors are often misunderstood because of concerns that privacy is being compromised and that many people refuse to accept family doctors.

Although TCM is the treasure of Chinese civilization, which has a better mass basis, into the new century, for the lack of knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine, the false propaganda of the "false" of TCM, leading people to doubt the scientific nature of traditional Chinese Medicine, especially the young people which accept of TCM to reduce, the decline in the acceptability of Chinese medicine will inevitably hinder the development of Chinese medicine.

#### IV. DISCUSSION ON THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

### A. Carry out the Reform of Basic Medical Association and Set up a Hierarchical Diagnosis and Treatment System Dominated by Family Doctors

The number of primary health care institutions, the national financial burden, but most of the medical level is limited, service efficiency is insufficient, especially at the grassroots level of TCM medical institutions, mostly independent operation. The family doctor in principle implements the Team contract service system, realizes the medical resources effective integration the effective way is carries on the reform to the primary medical system.

Carrying out the joint operation of primary medical institutions is a good guarantee to promote the family doctor service. By the Township hospital or community Health Service center to lead, combined with its services within the scope of the health room, outpatient clinics and other medical institutions, the formation of medical consortia, common management, unified administration. Doctors in the medical union have the freedom to form Medical service team, family doctor Service to carry out Medical service

team responsibility system, each medical service team to provide the service independently, only accept the unified management and management. The residents are free to choose the service team in the primary medical union, improve the team's performance appraisal system and make the competition between the teams and improve the quality of service.

Perfect and strict implementation of grading system, improve the first rate of primary diagnosis, the residents of the disease no longer blindly seek medical advice, but the choice of family doctors, when the family doctor cannot handle their disease, by the family doctor issued a certificate to help him upward referral, improve the rational utilization of medical resources. By controlling medical insurance expenses reimbursement to carry out grading diagnosis and treatment, if the contracted residents to visit other medical institutions, reduce or cancel the reimbursement of their costs, thus forming a family doctor-led grading system.

### B. Promoting DRG, Implementing Flexible Signing Service Fees

Promoting Diagnosis-Related Group, DRG quantifies the amount of resources that each disease consumes under various conditions, through many clinical data comparisons, to determine how much costs should be paid, so that the patient's treatment is related to the patient's condition and has nothing to do with the characteristics of the service provider. In the case of medical expenses prepaid, the medical institution should only reduce the service cost, reduce the induced consumption of medical service, reduce the medical cost and improve the utilization ratio of medical resources.

The costs of contractual services for family doctors are directly related to the remuneration of doctors, with reference to other national, each family doctor provides health services for about 2000 people, but the level of service provided by different family physicians varies, so that the contract service fee for family physicians can be flexible and the signing fee is given guidance by the Government, The quality of service determines how much the contract costs, under this system, the family doctor will be in the quality of service unchanged under the premise of the initiative to reduce medical costs.

# C. Accelerate the Promotion of Health Electronic Record (HER), Build National Health Information System

The personal health file is the standard and scientific record of the residents 'health management process. The HER after years of development, but still cannot take root in a most country, the main reason is that the information provider and user are difficult to coordinate, HER make drug use information, health information come to together, the development of its not only benefited to doctor and patient, also to the hospital, payer and drug firms in the industry has very important role of all parties, to promote efficiency to reduce cost, also can be obtained from the important data for analysis and strategy, so the promotion of EHR is quite difficult, even have already established the HER is difficult



to achieve information sharing ,because HER management make patients concerned about their health information is leaked.

The construction of the HER Storage Management System by the Government can greatly improve the security of residents 'health information, and can realize information sharing and improve the utilization of health information. For example, when residents visit a health information platform using unique identification (such as identity cards) can access their own health records, the effective use of HER can simplify procedures, reduce medical errors, improve the quality of care, reduce medical costs.

# D. Continue to Strengthen the Training of Talents and Attach Importance to the Continuing Education of TCM

According to "The outline of the strategic planning for the development of traditional Chinese medicine (2016 - 2030)", the increments of Chinese medicine workers accounted for 15% of the increments of health workers, basically realize the urban and rural residents of every million people have 0.4- 0.6 A qualified Chinese medicine practitioner.

The development of Chinese medicine can't be separated from the cultivation of Chinese medicine talents, perfect the training mechanism of Chinese medicine talents, respect the law of traditional Chinese medicine talents training, enlarge the scale of talent cultivation in TCM colleges, and strictly control the quality of Chinese medicine talents. We should encourage traditional training models such as "Teacherband" and improve the evaluation mechanism of traditional talents training.

The local governments should pay attention to the continuing education of TCM, the continuing education of TCM should not be a mere formality, and should carry out regular continuing education activities to strengthen the training of medical personnel, especially the basic medical staff.

#### E. Strengthen the Culture of Chinese Medicine Education

The Chinese Medicine Law stipulates that the promotion and popularization of Chinese medicine should not be false or exaggerated, and that it should not be used in the name of Chinese medicine. Radio, television, newspapers, internet and other media to carry out knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine should be engaged in professional and technical personnel of Chinese medicine. The provisions of the Chinese Medicine Act vigorously combat the "false propaganda" of Chinese medicine and reduce the adverse effects on Chinese medicine.

The Government and the Community should undertake the task of educating the public on traditional Chinese medicine, and the public awareness and education of Chinese medicine can adopt modern media methods, such as the public service advertisement of Chinese medicine culture on the mainstream TV channel and the dissemination of Chinese medicine knowledge to the public through new

media channels. To strengthen the publicity and education of Chinese medicine and to enhance national recognition of national culture can also promote the development of Chinese medicine.

#### V. CONCLUSION

From what has been discussed above, we can draw the conclusion that traditional Chinese medicine provides family services with many challenges at present, such as government policy, traditional Chinese medicine service technology, preference for medical treatment and so on. There is a long way to go for every family to enjoy the service of TCM. However, the advantages of TCM in providing family services determine the great potential. Creating an external environment for TCM and encouraging innovation can enable everyone to enjoy the TCM and family doctor services.

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