

FORTY-SECOND WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY GENEVA, 8-19 MAY 1989
WHA42.43 Traditional medicine and modern health care

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The Forty-second World Health Assembly,

Recalling earlier resolutions of the Health Assembly concerning traditional medicine ([WHA29.72](#), [WHA30.49](#), [WHA40.33](#)) and medicinal plants ([WHA31.33](#), [WHA41.19](#));

Noting that these resolutions together constitute a comprehensive approach to the subject;

Aware that plants used in traditional medicine hold great but still largely unexplored potential for the development of new drugs against major diseases for which effective treatment is not yet available;

Convinced that a substantial increase in national and international funding and support is needed if significant progress is to be made in this field;

1. URGES Member States:

(1) to make a comprehensive evaluation of their traditional systems of medicine;

(2) to make a systematic inventory and assessment (pre-clinical and clinical) of the medicinal plants used by traditional practitioners and by the population;

(3) to introduce measures for the regulation and control of medicinal plant products and for the establishment and maintenance of suitable standards;

(4) to identify those medicinal plants, or remedies derived from them, which have a satisfactory efficacy/side-effect ratio and should be included in the national formulary or pharmacopoeia;

(5) to explore ways in which traditional practitioners may be used to extend the coverage of primary health care;

(6) to encourage collaboration between universities, health services, training institutions and relevant international organizations in the scientific appraisal of traditional forms of medical treatment and their application, where indicated, in modern health care;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to assist Member States in giving full effect to this resolution and the related resolutions mentioned;

(2) to provide technical guidance and support through consultations, intercountry meetings, workshops, seminars, training courses and other appropriate means;

(3) to strengthen the traditional medicine programme to enable it to ensure the timely implementation of the activities required;

(4) to report on the progress achieved to the Forty-fourth World Health Assembly.

Hbk Res., Vol. II (1985), 1.15.4 (Thirteenth plenary meeting, 19 May 1989 -
Committee A, fourth report)