

GP-TCM Monthly Newsletter February 2010

Chinese New Year and Lantern Festival Issue

From the Editor:

This Issue celebrates *the Year of the Tiger* and *Lantern Festival*.

Chinese New Year is the most important of the traditional Chinese holidays celebrated in countries and territories with significant Han Chinese populations, such as Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Thailand, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines. It is commonly called "Lunar New Year", because it is based on the lunisolar Chinese calendar. On p.4, you will see the 12 birth emblems.

The Lantern Festival (also called Yuan Xiao Festival; 元宵節) marks the grand finale of the Chinese New Year celebrations. It is celebrated on the 15th day of the first month of the lunar year when there is a full moon. Thousands of colourful lanterns are hung out with puzzles and riddles written on them for people to solve. It is also a time for families to come together and celebrate with one another the coming of the new year. To know more about these interesting aspects of Chinese culture, read *A guide to the Lantern Festival at the end of Chinese New Year celebrations* [<http://www.helium.com/items/1734121-lantern-festival>]. To watch a spectacular display of lanterns, go to <http://english.cctv.com/20100227/102604.shtml>

Consortium Events:

1. The 9th CO Teleconference/3rd Management & Science Meeting (MSM): The teleconference focused on "Work package (WP) summaries for the last 3 months" and took place on 29th January 2010. Meeting attendees included CO members, Literature Review Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Panel Co-Chairs and WP Coordinators/Representatives. All WP Representatives reviewed the progress of their WP, highlighted issues that they have encountered during October 2009 – January 2010, summarised their future plans and answered questions from meeting attendees. Other issues discussed during the teleconference included quality control for consortium deliverable reports, update on the GP-TCM website, plans for the 4th MSM and the proposed GP-TCM Special Issue to be published in *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*.

2. Editorial Board Meeting and labour division:

The Website Editorial Board is composed of all WP website representatives, and general maintenance and update of the website contents will be handled by the members of this board. Website Representatives for each WP are as follows: Monique Simmonds (WP1), Mirko Bayer (WP2), Hani El-Nezami (WP3), Dave Barlow (WP4), María Laura García Bermejo (WP5), Jin Xu (WP6), Tai-Ping Fan (WP7), Jun Jia (WP8), Marianne Verberne (WP9), and Halil Uzuner (WP10).

A teleconference was held on 20th January 2010, which brought together GP-TCM Website Representatives and Editorial Board members to help assign the project website maintenance tasks and duties to ensure the website is kept up-to-date and all partners are given necessary support on web-related issues. During the meeting, WP representatives discussed and agreed on their roles and responsibilities to maintain the project website. In addition, the latest website functionalities were demonstrated and discussed in detail. The labour division agreed during the meeting is as follows:

- GP-TCM website will be available in two languages for the time being, namely English (main language) and Chinese (available given that users enter information in Chinese).
- Each WP website representative will maintain their associated WP webpage and will be responsible of the contents displayed.
- Each representative will assist their WP members to use the website and upload/post items at their WP webpage.
- WP representatives will use/test the internal pages and provide feedback to Halil and Tai-Ping in order to further improve the project website.
- The Website Editorial Board will gather whenever necessary to discuss major issues via teleconference meetings. The board will also make decisions via email exchanges if necessary.

3. GP-TCM Website will be launched during the first two weeks of March. To expedite the official launch of our website, Tai-Ping Fan and Halil Uzuner had an intensive meeting with Martin Christy of Micrograde.com on 26 February, to discuss various issues that need revamp or fine-

tuning. We are delighted to report that a test and staging version of the site was created to diagnose problems thoroughly before the live site becomes fully functional. Also, thanks to our colleagues in China, several important parts of the website have been translated into Chinese, so as to make the website largely bilingual.

4. The GP-TCM Consortium has submitted an application for membership to the Consortium for Globalisation of Chinese Medicine (CGCM).

All new membership applications will be considered and voted at the executive council meeting at the upcoming 9th CGCM Meeting to be held in Hong Kong on Aug 23-25, 2010. <http://www.tcmmedicine.org/>

5. GP-TCM call on members to pay attention to a recent EU call for proposals:

Title: HEALTH Programme: Call for Proposals for projects and conferences

Deadline: 19 March 2010

Details: The Health Programme is the European Commission's main instrument for implementing the EU health strategy. The programme aims, through projects and other actions it funds, to improve the level of physical and mental health and well-being of EU citizens and reduce health inequalities throughout the Community. In particular, the Programme supports **health-promoting and preventive actions that address the major health determinants e.g., nutrition, physical activity, or smoking.** The Health Programme is implemented in the form of annual work plans, which the European Commission adopts. The first Programme of Community action in the field of public health (2003-2008) financed over 300 projects and other actions. The objectives of the current programme are: (i) to improve citizens' health security; (ii) to promote health, including the reduction of health inequalities; (iii) to generate and disseminate health information and knowledge. Chapter 3 of the 2010 Work Plan* sets out details of the priority areas for action in implementing the programme. Proposals submitted under the Health Programme should *not* contain significant elements related to research. Please e-mail the GP-TCM Coordination Office if you are planning to put forward a proposal, especially if you need any support from the consortium, please e-mail: Dr. Qihe Xu (qihe.xu@kcl.ac.uk). We will do our best to provide assistance.

* <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:340:0001:0046:EN:PDF>

* <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/health.html>

6. World Traditional Medicine Patent Database:

In kind return to our support to a grant application led by East Linden, the company has decided to provide the GP-TCM consortium up to 30 usernames and passwords for free access to their World Traditional Medicine Patent Database (WTMPD). The database covers all patent literature related to natural medicines issued by 22 countries and 2 international organisations since 1985. All patents, both in Chinese and English, totalling 110,000 (more than 200,000 family patents), are high-quality manually processed, deeply indexed and translated. WTMPD has several auxiliary databases, such as natural medicine database, chemical substance database, Chinese medicine formula database. Based on the above rich resources, professional searching functions are provided to facilitate the efficient utilizing of patent information, including quick search, form search, advanced search, IPC search, chemical structure search, natural medicine search, Chinese medicine formula search, as well as Chinese medicine formula similarity search have been designed. In addition, this database provide over 30 search entries and support multi-language search, synonym expansion search and cross-database search. Any GP-TCM members who are interested in this database please contact Dr. Halil Uzuner (halil.uzuner@kcl.ac.uk) for further information. <http://www.eastlinden.com.cn/english.asp>

7. WP1 Kick-off Meeting Phase I: The members of Work packages (WPs) 1 and 2 were invited to a workshop at Kew (UK) in September 2009 to discuss the criteria to be used to select plants, to allocate tasks among members and to discuss future meetings. All these tasks were addressed during the phase I meeting. A preliminary list of plants has been distributed to members of the group and also forwarded to other WPs. It was agreed that the aim of the WP is to collate data about a number of species to enable us to identify gaps of information needed for TCM plants to meet the registration requirements within Europe and that the number of priority species of the WP should be low and thus might reflect a simple formulation that contains only a few species. Once the species are agreed, members will provide other groups with all relevant names for the selected species so that these can be used in database search. The group also agreed the structure of a simple database and requested whether they might be able to have Wikipedia style functionality for the WP1 member space to download relevant papers and data. Members agreed to try and meet face to face in 2010 as a

phase II meeting and communicate virtually in between.

Forthcoming GP-TCM and non-GP-TCM Meetings:

1. The phase II WP1/2 joint meeting (quality control and composition analysis/purification) will take place at Schloss Mickeln, Mickeln Manor, Düsseldorf, Germany on 19th - 20th April 2010 (<http://www.uni-duesseldorf.de/home/gaeste/schlossmickeln/eng>)
Contact Dr. Jandirk Sendker: sendker@gmx.net.

2. 11th Congress of the International Society of Ethnopharmacology (ISE 2010) Continuity and change in ethnopharmacology: Transdisciplinary science for our future. The 11th ISE Congress will take place in Albacete, Spain from the 20th -25th September 2010. The Congress will be one of the most exciting and prestigious events in the field of medicinal plant sciences.

The main themes of the congress are:

- Ethnopharmacology and biocultural diversity;
- Circum-Mediterranean ethnopharmacology/ethnobotany and its exchange with the Americans;
- From traditional remedies to modern medicines: phytochemical, pharmacological & clinical studies;
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and their role in ethnopharmacology
- The interface between history and ethnopharmacology
- The interface of medicinal and food plants
- Various symposia including one organised by young ethnopharmacologists.

For further details, please visit the website (www.ISE2010.org). All submissions need to be made via this website.

Appointment of new GP-TCM Members and changes of membership or labour division:

1. Consortium Advisory Board Co-Chairs: Congratulations to **Prof. Yung-Chi Cheng** (Yale School of Medicine) and **Prof. Brian Clark** (Aarhus University, Denmark) for their appointment as co-chairs of the GP-TCM Advisory Board! The Advisory Board provides GP-TCM with an external perspective on the strategic positioning of the consortium's activities and is composed of well-known experts in the fields associated with GP-TCM activities. The board will suggest recommendations on general aspects of the project activities to the Coordination Office (CO), the Steering Committee, and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The aforementioned committees may also invite the Advisory Board to provide recommendations on specific issues.

2. Welcome Greer Deal and Bobby Deal, Global Regulatory Services (GRS, UK) to join WP7 of GP-TCM (R&D and Regulatory Issues of CHM research; coordinated by Dr Tai-Ping Fan and Prof. Kelvin Chan).

Greer Deal's career in pharmaceuticals began at a small German owned company where she was responsible for medical information, pharmacovigilance, product defect reporting, Named Patient Supply programmes as well as interacting with clinical trial and regulatory departments. After 8 years as General Manager of a regulatory affairs consultancy, she and with Bobby Deal set up GRS www.globalregulatoryservices.com, to specialise on advice, support and solutions to the life science industry with a focus on regulatory affairs and innovation. Having once been an aromatherapist, Greer's passion for plant-derived products has resulted in the company dealing with many enquiries on herbals coming from overseas. She recently presented at Genesis 2009 on the European Traditional Herbal Registration Scheme which formed part of the Botanical Stream sponsored by GRS. The Botanicals Stream was a pilot and was so successful that it will become a permanent feature of future Genesis conferences. With R&D pipelines drying up and blockbuster drugs going off patent, Greer realises that it is an opportune time to re-investigate the healing properties of plants and to promote their use. A full member of Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and The Organisation for Professionals in Regulatory Affairs (TOPRA), she is keen for GRS to become an integral part of this emerging area of the industry.

Bobby Deal started as an Anaesthetic Technician working with the medical teams involved in the first heart, liver and kidney transplants at Papworth and Addenbrookes Hospitals. Despite a serious injury that interrupted his career, he made use of his life-long passion and interest in plants and their health promoting properties to establish Crème de la Crème Ltd and produced functional moisturising creams and lotions (incorporating key essential oils) for dry, cracked skin conditions. In May 2008 he launched Global Regulatory Services, a full service regulatory affairs consultancy to the Pharmaceutical Industry. Bobby saw a need not only to provide advice and support but also solutions to life science companies. To date, their clients range from top multi-national pharmaceutical companies through to one-man startups with enquiries now predominantly related to herbal and plant-based products. He is closely involved with the London Regenerative Medicine Network (LRMN) and the East of England Stem Cell Network (EESCN) with Global Regulatory

Services gaining a solid reputation in being able to assist innovative clients to achieve their objectives.

3. Prof. Shu-Ming Li (Philipps - Universität Marburg, PUM, Germany) has decided to withdraw his beneficiary membership from all WPs (WP1 and WP3) due to other more pressing commitments. He will return the funding originally allocated to him to the GP-TCM coordinating institution and a replacement of PUM will be identified in the near future. From the beginning of 2010, Shu-Ming will become a non-beneficiary member of the GP-TCM Consortium, specifically devoted to WP10 (management) activities. On behalf of GP-TCM consortium and the management team, we would like to thank Shu-Ming for his efforts for the preparation of the project proposal and his support during the last months and we look forward to collaborating with him in his new role!

4. New local appointments: Ms. Noelia Tejedor (UA, Spain) has been appointed to join GP-TCM as local assistant to the WP5 Coordinator Prof. Francisco Javier de Lucio Cazaña. Noelia studied Pharmacy at the San Pablo CEU University and then registered at the University of Alcalá de Henares, where she got two Masters Degrees on “Orthopaedics for Pharmacists” and on “Cell signaling Pathways as Therapeutic Targets: Research & Development”. This degree has been awarded with an official “Excellence Mention” by the Spanish Ministry of Education. Noelia currently develops her professional activity as a Head of Pharmacy, being especially active in cooperating with official institutions in several fields. Worth noting is her participation in the official programs of the Region of Madrid “Network of Sentinel Pharmacies of the Region of Madrid” and “Servicing the Poli-medicated Elderly”, as well as the cooperation with the Spanish Red Cross and the National Antidrug Agency in the program “Methadone Maintenance Program in Pharmacies”. Additionally, she is a PhD student supervised by Prof. Francisco Javier de Lucio Cazaña on the project titled “Animal Studies of Chinese Herbal Medicine in the post-genomic era”.

Other issues:

1. CAM is becoming more popular, so what?

– Some people welcome it while others warning...

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1246009/Alternative-medicine-sales-soar-consumers-shake-cynicism.html#comments>

– The departing Editor of *The Scientist* said “Dramatic growth in sales of homeopathic and other ineffective “medicines.” These waste money,

endanger lives and can discredit the entire field of drug discovery.”

<http://www.the-scientist.com/2010/1/1/11/1/>

– Clearly clinical efficacy is the key, but who is willing to pay the huge bills of clinical trials on CAM, including TCM?

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The Twelve Birth Emblems of the Chinese Calendar

Animal	New Year dates	
鼠 shǔ Rat	Feb 19, 1996;	Feb 7, 2008 1996; 1984; 1972; 1960; 1948; 1936
牛 niú Ox	Feb 7, 1997	Jan 26, 2009
虎 hǔ Tiger	Jan 28, 1998	Feb 14, 2010
兔 tù Rabbit	Feb 16, 1999	Feb 3, 2011
龙 lóng Dragon	Feb 5, 2000	Jan 23, 2012
蛇 shé Snake	Jan 24, 2001	Feb 10, 2013
马 mǎ Horse	Feb 12, 2002	Jan 31, 2014
羊 yáng Sheep	Feb 1, 2003	Feb 19, 2015
猴 hóu Monkey	Jan 22, 2004	Feb 8, 2016
鸡 jī Rooster	Feb 9, 2005	Jan 28, 2017
狗 gǒu Dog	Jan 29, 2006	Feb 16, 2018
猪 zhū Pig	Feb 18, 2007	Feb 5, 2019

To help you find out your animal sign, I have subtracted 12, 24, 36, 48, 60 and 72 from 2008, to show the 6 previous Rat Years. Do the same for the other signs and you will soon match your year of birth with your birth emblem. [TPF]