

GP-TCM Monthly Newsletter February-March 2011 Issue

Features in this Issue:

1. UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) Press Release (18 March 2011): 100th traditional herbal registration granted. The number of herbal products registered under the Traditional Herbal Registration (THR) scheme hit the 100 mark today increasing consumer choice for safe herbal products across the UK. The MHRA THR scheme has been designed so that the public will no longer have to guess at the safety and quality of herbal medicines as there is continuing evidence of low grade, and sometimes dangerous, unlicensed products on the market. More widespread is the problem of weak or absent product information. Consumers were not informed on whether there would be interactions with other medicines, any known side effects or if the product would be safe to be taken in pregnancy or by children. MHRA Head of Herbal Medicine Policy, Richard Woodfield, said: "The growth of the THR scheme means that consumers will have access to a wide choice of over-the-counter herbal medicines made to assured standards. "The current signs are that the market will be lively and competitive. The key difference for consumers is that in future they will be in the driving seat and able to make an informed choice when they wish to use these medicines." The scheme takes full effect from 30 April 2011.

<http://www.mhra.gov.uk/NewsCentre/Pressreleases/CON111687>

2. UK Department of Health Press Release (16 February 2011): Analysis report on the 2009 consultation on the statutory regulation of practitioners of acupuncture, herbal medicine, traditional Chinese medicine and other traditional medicine systems practised in the UK http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Responsestoconsultations/DH_124337

GP-TCM Activities:

1. The 2nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the GP-TCM consortium will be held in Braga, Portugal (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Braga>), on 21st - 24th July 2011.

As part of the 2nd AGM, the Consortium is planning to organise a satellite scientific symposium, coupled with the Annual Meeting,

which will be an excellent opportunity for our members and their co-workers to present their work as posters and lectures as well as discuss topics related to the evaluation of TCM in terms of efficacy, toxicology and pharmacology aspects, etc. This satellite meeting intends to provide a platform for discussion forums and sharing knowledge devoted to a wider audience than just the GP-TCM meeting attendees.

The meeting sessions will be held at the University of Minho, and the participants will be accommodated at Hotel Melia Braga (5 min walking distance to the University). Braga is located in North West Portugal, and is the oldest Portuguese city and one of the oldest Christian cities in the world, founded during the times of Roman Emperor Augustus (around the year 20 BC). How to reach Braga? The best airport to reach Braga is the Porto airport. Further meeting details as well as travel information will be provided in due course.



2. Joint WP1-WP2 Phase III Meeting: The Joint Phase III meeting of WP1 and WP2 was held in Braga, Portugal on 3rd – 4th December 2010, which was hosted by Prof. Alberto Dias (UMINHO, Portugal) and brought together nine GP-TCM members from Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and the United Kingdom. The meeting started with a welcome dinner on the 2nd of December, and continued with focused discussions on how to organise the data collection for forthcoming deliverables within the involved work packages. As a result, a form was drafted based on the insights of previous deliverables of WP1 and

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WP2. The meeting attendees were given a number of informative presentations and lectures such as Prof. Monique Simmonds' (KEW, UK) presentation on "Quality Control Requirements", Dr. Jandirk Sendker's (Münster, Germany) presentation on "Possible Fields for the Application of Chemometric Methods in TCM" and Prof. Rob Verpoorte's (LU, the Netherlands) lecture on "The Application of Metabolomic Technologies in the Field of Traditional Medicines". In addition, the group discussed a number of modern analytical methods used for characterising TCMs and some metabolomic techniques used for TCM research.



3. Genesis 2010 Conference was held on 9th December 2010 in London UK. 10th Annual Genesis Conference, a leading biotechnology networking event in Europe, gathered over 700 delegates and 81 exhibitors to maximise existing relationships and build new ones through extensive networking. Global Regulatory Services (GRS), a GP-TCM non-beneficiary partner, hosted the Botanicals/Natural Products Stream, which was chaired by Prof. P. Hylands (WP4 Coordinator). The delegates were provided with an overview of the industry from harvest to finished product and also case studies were presented from the UK and other parts of the world. The Stream focused on number of issues including quality control and safety, as well as number of case studies (MHRA's perspective of the Traditional Herbal Medicines Product Directive, overview of the regulations which could apply to botanicals and natural products in the UK, the regulatory strategy for Ginseng, Natural Product Discovery from Marine Microbes, and Product Pricing and Reimbursement). GP-TCM members Prof. M. Simmonds and Mrs. G. Deal also delivered talks during the event. For the full report and further information, please visit <http://www.gp-tcm.org/2011/02/genesis-conference-botanicalsnatural->

[products-stream/](http://www.gp-tcm.org/2011/02/genesis-conference-botanicalsnatural-products-stream/). The event helped understand the challenges being faced by botanical and natural product companies and how to overcome those challenges. Genesis 2011 will be held on 1st December 2011, and GRS will host the Botanicals/Natural Products Stream.

www.genesisconference.com



4. The WP3 survey: GP-TCM WP3 (Functional genomics in toxicology study of Chinese herbal medicines) is currently conducting an electronic survey using SurveyMonkey website, which will help us assess the perception of stakeholders towards the use of Chinese herbs. The study will lead to define the different factors that influence the perceptions of quality and safety of herbal medicines, notably Traditional Chinese Medicines.

In order to achieve this, we would like to invite health professionals, distributors and health authorities, as well as patients (users and non-users of herbal products) to complete the electronic survey with customised questions to suit their involvement via the links given below (in Chinese, English, and French):

Chinese: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/T77DHZQ>

English: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/T7M8BHS>

French: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/T7QV7G2>

Furthermore, if you are the representative of a health organisation, or TCM-related institution/body, please encourage your members to complete the questionnaire. We welcome your comments to help us to identify any appropriate links to be contacted from main Chinese/European professional TCM bodies for questionnaire dissemination (please contact Prof. Pierre Duez pduetz@ulb.ac.be).

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5. RfP: A Healthier Life by Using Traditional Herbal Medicines: NineSigma, representing Merck, invites proposals for traditional herbal medicinal products that are able to treat specific health indications.

Opportunity:

Product acquisition, licensing, proof of concept leading to scale-up to manufacturing, joint development, supplier agreement, contract research

The successful proposals will:

- Have proven traditional use:
 - 30 years in the European Union or
 - 15 years in the EU and 30 years outside the EU
- Have safety data
- Have few or no side effects, be non-irritating and non-addictive
- Have data on plausibility of efficacy, ideally with clinical proof on humans
- Be able to be incorporated in a user-friendly and modern dosage form
- Be cost effective
- Preferably be commercially available or at least able to be commercialized within 1-3 years

Deadline for submission is 31st March 2011. For complete details on the RFP, visit NineSigma.com or email: PhD@ninesigma.com.

6. Free resources exclusive for GP-TCM members - The East Linden World Traditional Medicine Patent Database (WTMPD): In kind return to our support to a grant application led by East Linden, the company has provided the GP-TCM consortium free access to WTMPD: <http://www.wtmpd.com/>. 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 150,000 (more than 400,000 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 provides over 30 search entries and supports 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.

7. The 7th and 8th e-MSM teleconferences were held on 21st and 23rd February 2011 respectively. The issues discussed during both teleconferences included (i) detailed reports from WP coordinators regarding WP activities over the last three months and future plans (ii) month 24 deliverables, (iii) GP-TCM Special Issue to be published in *J Ethnopharmacol*, (iv) 2nd AGM plans, (v) GP-TCM Final Conference invitees, (vi) SOP Panel update, and (vii) the consortium website and newsletter update.

GP-TCM Announcements, Appointments and Labour Division:

1. Appointment of Dr. Joseph Mezei (Transylvanian Association of Integrated Quantum Medicine, Romania) to GP-TCM as a non-beneficiary member devoted to WP8 (Acupuncture and Moxibustion studies; led by Prof. Xiaomin Wang, CCMU, China). Joseph's strong medical doctor background from two medical universities, integrated with natural health care process and teaching, gave him the opportunity to lay the foundation of the Medical Center Tongtian in 1992 (Sighisoara, Romania), which was one of the very first of its kind in Romania and treated patients from all over the world by applying only CAM methods. As headmaster of the centre, Joseph was actively involved with the Romanian Acupuncture Society (RAS), being elected as vice-president entitled to create connections with other international acupuncture bodies. Currently, the centre provides acupuncture, osteopathy, homeopathy and bioresonance as an integrative approach. Joseph's main research interest focuses on highlighting the space-time connections of human diseases (using electrophysiological characteristics of some acupuncture points, CO₂ emission measurements and electrolyte microelectrode measurements, all based on ancient TCM principles) and also to explain measured changes in terms of neurophysiology by trying to establish a common ground for both academic medicine and TCM. Being an active promoter of integrative concept

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into mainstream medicine, Joseph was involved with the establishment of a scientific medical association entitled “the Transylvanian Association of Integrated Quantum Medicine (TAIQM or ATMIC)” in 2003. TAIQM is located in Sighisoara, Romania, and its scope is “to develop and promote an integrative concept of convergence and harmonisation of all traditional and modern medical principles, found in the world heritage, based on current data of quantum informational biology”. **Warmest welcome and congratulations, Joseph!**

2. Appointment of Mr. Mark Bovey (UK) to GP-TCM as a non-beneficiary member devoted to WP8 (Acupuncture and Moxibustion studies; led by Prof. Xiaomin Wang, CCMU, China). Mr. Bovey’s short biography will be released in the next newsletter issue. **Warmest welcome and congratulations, Mark!**

www.acupunctureresearch.org.uk

EU Funding and Events:

1. COST Call for proposals to support research networking: The European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) has launched an open call to support research networks. The Call invites proposals for Actions contributing to the scientific, technological, economic, cultural or societal development of Europe. Proposals that are a precursor for other European programmes and/or initiated by early-stage researchers are particularly welcome. COST aims to develop stronger links among European researchers to build the European Research Area (ERA). By supporting networking activities, COST stimulates new, innovative, interdisciplinary and broad research networks in Europe. It covers the costs of networking activities such as meetings (e.g. travel, subsistence, local organiser support), conferences, workshops, short-term scientific exchanges, training schools, publications and dissemination activities. COST does not fund the research itself. http://www.cost.eu/participate/open_call

2. New measures planned by EU leaders to significantly improve innovation and research: European leaders will push for new measures designed to boost innovation and research. They stated this goal at the end of the Council of the European Union summit on 4th February 2011. Plans include supporting cooperation on large-scale research projects, simplifying access to funding and identifying new sources of venture

capital for innovative start-up enterprises. The Council also plans to improve mobility of researchers – ensuring a fully operational European Research Area. The Council’s summit conclusions correspond to the European Commission's Annual Growth Survey, including the need for smart fiscal consolidation and growth-enhancing measures. They mark strong support for improving the framework for the proposals for an Innovation Union.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/press_data/en/ec/119175.pdf

3. EuroNews launches “Innovation” a TV and internet magazine on research and innovation in Europe: EuroNews, the pan-European multilingual news television channel, has recently launched “Innovation”, a TV and internet magazine about research and innovation in Europe. The magazine aims to highlight the achievements of the Innovation Union Flagship Initiative. It will inform about successful stories of partnerships between European researchers and private entities – in particular Small and Medium Enterprises – leading to innovation in products and services. “Innovation” is produced for television in the 10 EuroNews languages and is available to all interested European broadcasters under certain conditions. TO VIEW "INNOVATION" please visit: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/videos/>

4. Interested in European Health Research?

If you are interested in receiving publications (electronic or paper copy) from the European Commission on Health and Life Sciences, which highlight the results of research projects financed by the European Union through the 6th and 7th Framework Programmes, please visit http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/e-library_en.html. To receive a copy of EC’s future publications on EU-funded health research, please register your interest before 28th February 2011 at <http://ec.europa.eu/research/health-library>.

Other press releases:

1. UK MHRA Press Release (11 Feb., 2011): People warned over adulterated herbal weight loss pill - test results reveal twice the prescribed dose of a banned pharmaceutical ingredient, sibutramine:

<http://www.mhra.gov.uk/NewsCentre/Pressreleases/CON108745>

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2. UK Department of Health Press Release (16 February 2011): Proportionate health and social care worker regulation to protect the public
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/MediaCentre/Pressreleases/DH_124376

Meetings and conferences:

1. The Quest for Personalised Health on 10-11 June 2011 at the EASTmedicine Research Centre, School of Life Sciences, University of Westminster, London, UK. Jointly organised by Prof. Jan van der Greef (University of Leiden) & Prof. Bridie Andrews-Minehan (Bentley University) and Dr Volker Scheid (University of Westminster), the purpose of the Conference is to bring together scholars and researchers from a range of different disciplines interested in the emerging interface between East Asian medicine and systems biology to discuss the modern quest for personalised health. More information on westminster.ac.uk/personalised-health

2. Bioscience for the 21st Century: Emerging Frontiers and Evolving Concepts – 13th International Symposium of the Society of Chinese Bioscientists in America, Guangzhou, China. 25 – 29 July 2011.
<http://www.scbameeting2011.org>

3. The 8th World Congress of Chinese Medicine will be held in Central Hall Westminster, London, UK, 2 – 3 September 2011. This event is organised by the World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (WFCMS; <http://www.wfcms.org/>) and hosted by the Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine UK (ATCM; <http://www.atcm.co.uk>). The theme of WCCM 2011 is "Traditional Chinese Medicine Benefits Human Health". The topics of presentations and workshops range from the study of TCM fundamental theory, clinical reports and experiences, scientific research of herbal medicine, acupuncture, moxibustion, tuina therapy and medical qigong, the setting of standards for higher education and scientific study, the development of a global strategy of Chinese medicine, and legislation of Chinese medicine, etc. Treatment of pain-related diseases, dermatology, and cancer management will be the focal points. More information on <http://www.2011wccm.com/>

4. The 59th International Congress and Annual Meeting of the Society for Medicinal Plant and

Natural Product Research (GA) to be held in Turkey, 4 – 9 September 2011:
<http://www.ga2011.org/>

Recommended further reading:

1. International Cooperation in EU-funded Health Research: From 2007 to 2010, the top 10 non-EU non-associated countries (number of participants in parentheses) USA (66), **India** (49), **Russia** (36), **South Africa** (30), **China** (25), **Tanzania** (21), **Canada** (18), **Australia** (16), **Uganda** (15) and **Burkina Faso** (13). For details, please visit:

ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/health/docs/ic-eu-funded-health_en.pdf

2. The Predictive Safety Testing Consortium: Focus & supplements from Nature Biotechnology:
<http://www.nature.com/nbt/focus/pstc/index.html>

3. The IPR2 Project has recently published papers on the Chinese patent system and on cultural and creative industries: The IPR2 Project has recently published reports in the field of intellectual property. The first one is a comparative analysis of the State Intellectual Property Office's Patent Examination Guidelines of 2006 and those of 2010 issued after the revision of the Patent Law in 2009. The second one is entitled "Mapping the Cultural and Creative Sectors in the EU and China: A Working Paper in support to the development of a EU-China Cultural and Creative Industries' (CCIs) platform". It aims to increase understanding on the potential value of increased trade in intellectual property rights (IPR), given that they are the main tools for commercial transactions in CCIs. A better understanding of IPR should help support their enforcement and open up new business opportunities between European and Chinese companies.

http://www.ipr2.org/storage/Patent_Examination_Guidelines_comparative_2006_and_2010845.pdf

http://www.ipr2.org/storage/Creative_industries_working_paper-EN848.pdf

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