

WORKSHOP ON INTEGRATION OF THE TRADITIONAL AND COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE PRACTICES INTO THE HEALTH SYSTEMS AND HEALTH SERVICES

(April 18, 2018)

OIC Strategic Health Programme of Action 2014-2023 presents six thematic areas of cooperation among the member countries. There is established a mechanism of Lead Country Coordinators Group in order to ensure cooperation and coordination among the member countries in these thematic areas. Among these areas, Turkey is acting as Lead Country Coordinator under the title of “*Health System Strengthening*”.

According to the Programme of Action, health system strengthening is one of the important cooperation areas among the OIC member countries and this provides an opportunity to develop organizational cooperation capacity of the OIC. In this regard, the mechanism of Lead Country Coordinator forms a basis to struggle with the global health challenges in Turkey and also in the other Lead Country Coordinators.

The target of “*Improving Access to Integrated, Safe and Quality Health Services*” included in Thematic Area-1 has been determined as a critical cooperation area among the OIC member countries. The followings are among the subtitles of this target:

- ✓ Facilitating the exchange of knowledge and best practices among the member countries through capacity building programmes,
- ✓ Facilitating intra-OIC cooperation in specialized field of healthcare (medical, pharmaceutical and nursing branches) to improve access to integrated quality health care services in member countries.

Today, provision of health services includes traditional and complementary medicine approaches in addition to the classical methodologies with a view to maintaining the wellbeing. However, traditional and complementary medicine practices have now ceased to be an exceptional approach and started to gain a universally recognized concept. In order to systemize the actual state, various international organizations and notably World Health Organization present reference documents in this area.

Within the framework of WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023 Plan, the member countries are encouraged to integrate the Traditional and Complementary Medicine Practices into their national health policies and for this purpose, develop generation of evidence-based knowledge, improve provision of health services in particular in the field of preventive health services, ensure safety of the relevant products, set certain standards for the relevant practices and regulate the practitioners as well as monitor and evaluate the Traditional and Complementary Medicine Practices based on this policy.

With the integration of the Traditional and Complementary Medicine Practices into the health system, it is targeted to;

- prevent current abuses regarding the Traditional and Complementary Medicine Practices;
- apply preventive medicine measures more effectively together with the Traditional and Complementary Medicine Practices;
- restrain health expenses of the country by introducing the Traditional and Complementary Medicine Practices in areas possible as a supportive mechanism considering that health expenses have increased considerably;
- benefit from the Medicinal Aromatic Plant diversity of Turkey together with the relevant ministries;
- resort to the supportive Traditional and Complementary Medicine Practices in order to reduce the overdoses (pain, etc.) of some currently used medicines and chemicals and keep them under control

Within this framework, the **1st International Traditional and Complementary Medicine Practices Congress** will be held in Istanbul between 19-22 April, 2018 in order to ensure compliance of the member countries with the WHO strategies, exchange opinions and provide transnational cooperation and coordination.

Furthermore, **Workshop on Integration of the Traditional and Complementary Medicine Practices into the Health Systems and Health Services** will be held on April 18, 2018 with the participation of OIC Secretariat, Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) and OIC member countries.

At the workshop, it is planned to include, in the context of the OIC, the concept of health system strengthening mentioned above. It is deemed useful to take into account the international regulations in dealing with the traditional and complementary medicine, which is applied distinctively in the OIC member countries, and also share the good practices in the member countries.

In addition, it is considered that scientific knowledge regarding the traditional and complementary medicine can be an element for contributing to development of national health systems and it can present an opportunity for transferring experience to the OIC member countries in view of Turkey's role as the Lead Country Coordinator.

Time and Venue

The workshop will take place in Istanbul, Turkey on 18 April 2018 and will be followed by the 1st International Traditional and Complementary Medicine Practices Congress on 19-22 April 2018.

Language

The workshop and Congress will proceed in English.