

Non-conventional medicine the position of FNOMCeO

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The event, which was widely covered by the media, saw the participation of the 103 provincial chairpersons of the Medical Association, political exponents and other interested parties who, with their contribution, enabled the convention to draw up a document that went on to be approved by the FNOMCeO National Council at their May 18th meeting, which stands as a reference point for the medical profession regarding the practice of non-conventional medicines and treatments.

Below we reproduce the entire text of the document:

FNOMCeO GUIDELINES ON NON-CONVENTIONAL MEDICINES AND PRACTICES

The "non-conventional medicines and practices" considered to be relevant in Italy from a social point of view, both on the basis of the indications given in Resolution N° 75 of the European Parliament, 29th May 1997, and in Resolution N° 1206 of the European Council, 4th November 1999, and on the basis of the growing use of some of them by the public, as well as forms of non-conventional therapy that have taken a foothold in Europe in recent decades, are:

1. Acupuncture
2. Herbal Medicine
3. Ayurvedic Medicine
4. Anthroposophic Medicine
5. Homeopathic Medicine
6. Traditional Chinese Medicine
7. Homotoxicology
8. Osteopathy
9. Chiropractic

The practice of the above non-conventional medicines and treatments should be considered medical practice to all effects, and thus we believe that:

- these medicines and treatments - as medical practice - should be practised and managed exclusively by medical doctors and dentists in patients likely to gain benefit, having provided adequate information and obtained explicit and conscious consent;

- Medical doctors and dentists are the only sanitary agents able to establish which patients are likely to benefit from the use of these medicines and practices, since only medical doctors and dentists are qualified to make diagnosis, permitting the correct discernment of usefulness and benefit from the informed use of non-conventional treatments;

- in this framework, medical doctors and dentists are the only ones in a position to prevent non-conventional medicines and practices from being suggested or prescribed to patients who cannot benefit from them, keeping them from the scientifically accredited therapies available, about which medical doctors and dentists should keep constantly up to date through the ECM;

- Medical doctors and dentists are the only ones who can legitimately carry out diagnosis, prepare the relative treatment plan and verify that it is carried out on the patient;

- the FNOMCeO and all provincial Associations must follow up, correctly and in good time, any non-medical professionals practising the above mentioned non-conventional medicines and treatments, reporting them to the relevant authorities;

- the FNOMCeO and all provincial Associations must take disciplinary measures against those medical doctors and dentists who do not respect the rules mentioned above, in conformity with the current Code of Ethics, or who lend their name to cover the practices of non-medical professionals regarding the above mentioned non-conventional medicines and treatments;

- it would be appropriate to establish a national FNOMCeO data base on international, national and regional legislation regarding non-conventional medicines and treatments, also based on reports from individual regional Associations;

- in order to ensure the coherent development of systems intended to ensure effectiveness and safety, in response to the consistent demand for non-conventional medicines and treatments, we should forcefully request the establishment of a National Agency, consisting of institutional bodies such as: the Ministry of Health, the Regions, MURST and FNOMCeO.

Among the main roles to be carried out by this Organisation, which could be structured into analogous regional bodies, we would foresee:

1. establishing and regulating activities regarding the individual non-conventional medicines and practices;

2. promoting basic and applied research, according to the rules of good clinical practice, into exclusive and, above all, integrated areas, favouring better knowledge of the principles and appropriate use of non-conventional medicines and practices within medical culture, making use of our own funding and that of public and private entities in Italy and Europe;

3. monitoring and information on the safe, effective and appropriate use of non-conventional medicines and practices, through six-monthly/yearly reports to the Institutions responsible for health protection;

4. regulating training syllabi by:
 - a. establishing criteria for the adoption of teaching standards;

b. defining criteria and requirements for the accreditation of public and private entities involved in teaching and training;

5. urging the competent institutions to take all those prescriptive and regulative measures useful to the pursuit of their institutional purposes;

- we should urge Parliament to take steps leading to an amendment to standards regarding medical publicity, as proposed by the FNOMCeO, with the insertion of specific standards for the sector;

- we should urge the relevant Authorities to take action towards the inclusion of entries, regarding professional services provided in exercising the above mentioned non-conventional medicines and practices, within the National minimum tariff list of fees for medical-surgical and dental services (decree DPR 17th February 1992), which, moreover, is in need of substantial and comprehensive reviewing;

- we should provide for the establishment of a register, kept by the provincial Medical and Dental Associations, subdivided into sections for each of the above mentioned non-conventional medicines and practices. The inclusion of medical doctors and dentists in the register will depend upon criteria to be established with the orientation and coordination of the FNOMCeO, in collaboration with the school and Scientific Societies accredited by the FNOMCeO, and roles and functions will be distinguished.

The National Federation of Medical and Dentists's Associations

STRONGLY REQUESTS

urgent and non-deferrable legislative intervention by Parliament, in order to approve specific regulations concerning non-conventional medicines and practices, on the basis of the information contained in this document.