

Thank you for taking the time to consider this proposal put forth by the board for a name change. It is a high priority of ours to keep as much communication going between the EAMP's/ LAC's in the state of Washington and the WEAMA board as possible. We are at an exciting and intense time for our profession as the practice of acupuncture in the US continues to grow. This situation comes with opportunities as well as some obstacles for us as a profession. It is the goal of WEAMA to educate our community with the information we come across as well as our experiences in order that we may all discuss and come to a decision together. I know it is difficult to find the time sometimes, it is appreciated and thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

I offered to volunteer for WEAMA at the spring meeting after realizing how much work the board was trying to do and how little support they had. When I joined, I became part of the Legislative committee and began to familiarize myself with the political landscape. During this time I gained a growing awareness of the reality of the political landscape and I had to reconsider my initial perspectives on how the profession was growing. I did not realize the bubble I was in.

Main points of what I have learned:

- Other professions are not aware of what acupuncture really is, much less the full medicine that we practice
- PT's and Nurses feel they can practice acupuncture because it is just a modality of what we do
- Although we have only reached about 10% of the population, experience and evidence based studies are now proving that acupuncture works and the military (VA) in particular wants to incorporate it and it is also a recognized pain alternative for the Opioid epidemic
- What happens in the military then proliferates out to the medical system of the US as a whole
- On the national level we are titled "Licensed Acupuncturists"; as the lobbyist in Washington DC pointed out; The decision has already been made for us. Calling ourselves anything else confuses Medical community and Legislative community.
- In 2018 our profession made it into the Standard Occupational Classification System as Acupuncturists. This is how the National Government defines our profession.
- In an effort to have a stronger position against PT's, Nurses and other medical professionals that want to practice our medicine, there is a general consensus to go by the title "acupuncturist" because it is clear and people know what it means and what we do.
- Using the term EAMP has led to a misunderstanding that acupuncture is just a modality/technique.
- I asked my fellow practitioners in my Integrative health clinic if they knew I was an EAMP - none of them did. None of them knew what the term meant either. Neither did the billing staff or the front desk staff. They all know me as the acupuncturist. (There have been multiple EAMP's/LAC's in the clinic over that 10 years, I am the newest.)

- The term East Asian Medicine Practitioner was decided as an attempt to include Chinese medicine as well as all other cultures that have evolved their version of the medicine, the academic circles are the strongest proponents of the term EAMP because it is geographically correct.
- The term East Asian put the medicine in a cultural context; The profession of being an acupuncturist then has to take on all the cultural implications of this and educate about the complexity - which has proven very challenging and has not happened over the past 10 years
- It has been brought to our attention by the Chinese Community that the term “East Asian” when referring to a person is a racial slur. (Please see their response.) No one asked the Chinese Community before changing the name to East Asian Medicine.

After learning all of this, it became clear that a potential name change should be discussed. Yes, there is the concern that acupuncture is too limiting of a title. Everyone shares that concern across the country. Because we are trying to be more nationally unified so that we can take place in conversations with AMA for such things as determining CPT codes for our profession, there is a push to clearly identify ourselves in the most familiar, consistent and accurate way as possible.

The reality of the current political climate is that our strongest position is getting a firm standing for our profession by being consistently known as acupuncturists. The title of acupuncturist does not define our medicine, it is just our title. The advantage to being called acupuncturists is that we have a strong claim on the portion of our medicine that is being encroached upon and what we are best known for. It is our foot in the door so to speak. As we earn more respect for our skill we will grow to be known for our full scope of practice.

The scope of practice in our RCW (state legislature) is where we define who we are as practitioners and the full scope and breadth of our medicine. We are looking to pass legislation this year to accurately reflect this as well as adding aspects of our increasing scope of practice with point injection therapy.

My conclusion is that using the term acupuncture is the most inclusive term for practitioners and gives the clearest title to the most people without being offensive and will give us the most recognition in medical circles as well as legislative circles and unity on a national level. While I understand the logic behind switching to the term EAMP, it has had some unforeseen consequences including a major issue of being a derogatory racial slur to the Chinese Community. I personally am not comfortable with calling someone something that is an insult over and over again knowingly. That seems cruel to me.

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