



Research Congress

Medical Section at the Goetheanum

**“The scientific status and future
of the AM therapies”**

Where do we stand? What are the barriers and opportunities for the further development and implementation of AM therapies and for AM therapy research? How do we connect to current developments? What must and can we do in the next 10 years?

An AM research congress on evidence, relevant developments in AM, conventional medicine and Traditional, Complementary & Integrative Healthcare (TCIH), research communities and research agendas development for the future

March 8 - 10, 2024

at the Goetheanum “Schreinerei”

At the beginning of the 20th century, new and innovative anthroposophic therapies were developed: art therapies, body-oriented therapies, external applications, eurythmy therapy, anthroposophic psychotherapy and anthroposophic pharmacotherapy. Since then, the anthroposophic therapies have been implemented, educated, studied and further developed in clinical practices all around the world for somatic and psychological/psychiatric indications, for patients of all ages. And, according to the clinical experiences from patients, therapists and doctors, they often appear to be of (great) benefit. However, at the beginning of the 21st century, the situation for the AM therapies is becoming increasingly challenging, due to scientific, societal, and healthcare developments.

First of all, the development of Evidence-Based Medicine that started in the nineties of the 20th century has (had) large impact. Due to the increasing important role of science in medicine and society, the access to and acceptance of the AM therapies is challenged by the need for a highly complex and expensive evaluation according to present standards. In medicine itself (e.g., inclusion of treatments in formal guidelines), and on the political level, decisions are often based on (high quality) scientific information (e.g., healthcare funding and regulation of medicines). Citizens/patients increasingly have access to scientific data and science-based recommendations for prevention and treatment that enable well-informed decision-making as part of health- and disease related self-management and shared decision-making. Therefore, prevention and treatment strategies need to be evidence-based. Based on results of clinical studies that provide high-quality evidence of safety and (cost-)effectiveness for specific indications, prevention and treatment strategies are accepted in medicine and society, and reimbursed by insurance companies. Due to an overall lack of high-quality evidence in combination with formal demands/ needs for evidence, AM therapies are currently in many countries threatened (e.g., no reimbursement from insurance companies, no formal acceptance)

A second important development is that, at the beginning of the 20th century, there were major differences between conventional medicine and AM. 100 years later, within conventional medicine, there is increasing attention for traditionally AM specific themes, such as: health/resilience promotion, person-centeredness, holistic, multidisciplinary approach in nursing, physiotherapy, art therapy, psychotherapy, pharmaceutical treatment, etcetera. And these themes are also addressed by the emerging global field of Integrative Medicine (IM)/Traditional, Complementary, Integrative Healthcare (TCIH), with several whole medical systems (Ayurveda, traditional Chinese medicine).

Thirdly, there is in several countries a reduction of AM doctors that refer their patients to AM therapies. In order to have non-AM doctors referring to AM therapist, there needs to be science-based information on AM therapies. And last but not least, there are several important developments AM can contribute to, like Green mental healthcare; TCIH strategies for AMR reduction, and prevention and treatment of infections; and non-pharmacological treatment of pain.

Against this background, the AM Research Congress 2024 theme is “The scientific status and future of the AM therapies”. Central questions that guide the program are:

- What are AM-relevant developments in medicine, society, and research?
- What is the specific value of AM therapies in comparison to current developments regarding prevention and treatment in conventional medicine and TCIH? What do the AM therapies have to offer to these developments?
- Where do we stand with the AM therapies research? What are barriers and opportunities for (implementation of) AM therapies and AM therapy research? Which short-term and long-term research goals do we have? What must and can we do in the next 10 years?