

# Contribution of Shiatsu to general healthcare in the UK



## **MESSAGES FROM A CROSS-EUROPEAN RESEARCH STUDY**

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# Public Healthcare contexts - General



- **The growth of chronic illnesses requiring attitudinal and lifestyle change for effective outcomes**
- **Ever increasing general healthcare costs, increase in older populations, near collapse of pension systems**
- **Business suffering from the huge costs of absenteeism and loss of productivity**
- **Value of health longevity in personal, social and economic terms**
- **Growing official awareness of the need to move towards more prevention and self and home healthcare**

# Public Healthcare contexts - Individual



- **Increasing public desire and demand for:**
  - Participation by the patient in their own healthcare
  - Greater personal responsibility
  - A model of care, and a practitioner approach to care that facilitates these two
  - A person-centred approach which focuses on quality processes of care, as well as positive outcomes
- **Delivery systems that focus on:**
  - ***Patient*** named outcomes
  - Use of *all* productive available resources that are safe - including complementary therapies
  - **Quality of care** delivery rather than on **who** delivers per se, once safety is assured

# Characteristics of CAM & Shiatsu 1



Shiatsu shares characteristics common to many CAM disciplines:

- Underpinning philosophy/Theoretical framework (Fulder 1998)
  - ✦ Restoring vital forces / self-healing energy
  - ✦ Working with, not against symptoms
  - ✦ Seeking the root of the problem (in the context of person's life / lifestyle)
  - ✦ Working with the individual, individualised care, listening,
- Shiatsu describes itself as:
  - Stimulating the client's life-energy system to primarily enhance wellbeing and thereby:*
  - ✦ Opening the mind-body connection
  - ✦ Working with the whole person/system
  - ✦ Enabling client knowledge and self responsibility



# Characteristics of CAM & Shiatsu 2



- Shiatsu seeks to deliver a treatment that can effect change on the physical, emotional and mental levels of being
- The approach is preventive, healing, and health building
- Shiatsu seeks to address underlying interconnected contributors to good health and to causes of illness
- Every treatment is unique. It is determined by an energetic diagnosis that is based on the interconnection of the physical, emotional, mental and energetic aspects of the client's presenting reasons and condition
- Treatment *includes* lifestyle and general health advice based on the energetic diagnosis and it's implementation at home by the client.



# Some Current Use of Shiatsu in Healthcare



**Shiatsu is currently used in the following settings:**

- **Maternity Care**
- **Addiction Units**
- **GP's Surgeries**
- **HIV and AIDS**
- **Cancer Care**
- **Mental Health**
- **Hospice Care**
- **Staff care**



# Research findings



Shiatsu's possible contribution to both general and individual public healthcare contexts:

*“Looking overall the expressed changes are indicative of a tendency to adopt a more relaxed, healthier and more balanced approach to life.” (Long 2009: 6)*



# Relevant research findings for Public Health 1



In public health provision there is regard for the wider causes of health difficulties and for effects beyond strictly medical care. Research shows that:

## **Shiatsu:**

- Improves general wellbeing,
- Acts to maintain health and prevent ill-health
- Promotes increased confidence about health
- Is safe
- Benefits are sustained over time
- Very high levels of client satisfaction



# Relevant research findings for Public Health 2



## **Shiatsu**

- Improves health awareness
- Provides health education
- Reduces symptoms that compromise productivity
- Reduces use of conventional medicine and medication
- Potential benefits for business through reduction in working days lost (fell by 50% during study) are indicative of added value and potential economic benefit from shiatsu treatment



# Healthy lifestyle changes



- 76% Given advice or recommendations made
- 79% **Lifestyle changes made (at 6 months )**
- 70% Increased rest and relaxation
- 54% Took more exercise
- 53% Changed diet
- 22% Reduced work



# Healthcare usage change



**After six months:**

- **18% of respondents showed reduced use of conventional medicine for problems**
- **23% noted reduced medication use**
- **34% used other CAM to treat these problems.**



# Client-Practitioner interaction and the treatment environment



% agreed or agreed strongly on:

- The practitioner:

- *accepted me* 72%
- *listened to me* 75%
- *was skilful* 83%
- *was trustworthy* 87%

- The treatment environment:

- they liked the *treatment environment* 70%



# How Shiatsu-specific effects are achieved



- **Power of relaxation:** Shiatsu's impact on NS functioning and corresponding benefit for body systems functioning, natural healing, speed of healing and direct impact on some symptoms
- **Healthier:** Virtuous circle potential of health improvement from a pleasant therapy experience evoking motivation to follow practitioner recommendations and other self motivated healthy changes leading to better health
- **Balance:** key capacity of mind-body awareness which includes but is more than health awareness creating more personal power, responsibility, and decision making about life overall and health



# Wider healthcare potential



- Prima facie case based on core philosophy and practised based commitments of CAM (Long 2009)
  - Increase in health literacy of users
  - Development of awareness and knowledge
  - Apply this knowledge in their everyday life
- Influence of the safe and protected space created by the practitioner and the treatment environment
- Role of the therapeutic relationship
- Potential of the holistic nature of the approach



# Wider healthcare potential



- *Shiatsu:*

promotes a mind/body connection in the client such that the relationship between physical symptoms, lifestyle, and emotional and psychological patterns is *understood experientially*, thus engaging the client's motivation to make healthy lifestyle changes

# Healthcare Contexts-General: Conclusions



## Shiatsu

- Provides safe healthcare
- Maintains health
- Actively and practically motivates healthier living and ageing
- Provides potential cost savings for healthcare delivery and for business

# Healthcare Contexts-Individual: Conclusions



## Shiatsu

- **Supports personal responsibility for health**
- **Promotes body and health awareness**
- **Increases health literacy**
- **Responds to what people want**
- **Makes healthcare collaborative, empowering and a pleasure**