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Lorna K.P. Suen (RN, RM, BN, MPH, PhD) is currently an Associate Professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She received both her degrees in Bachelor of Nursing and Master of Public Health in the University of Sydney, Australia, while she obtained her PhD in Nursing from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Her specialization and research interests are Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM), auriculotherapy, critical care nursing and sleep studies. She has published many articles in nationally and internationally refereed journals, as well as book chapters. She was granted membership of the Golden Key National Honour Society of Australia in 1994 and of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing since 2003. Currently, she serves as a member of the editorial board of several journals, and is likewise a reviewer of various journals. She is also active in several community organizations in Hong Kong as a consultant.
Complementary and alternative care: bridging bench and bedside

Lorna K.P. Suen

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) as a treatment modality is increasingly becoming acceptable to the general public as proven by its widespread use around the world. CAM involves interventions that focus on the body, mind, and spirit; in short, it offers a holistic approach to healthcare. Therefore, a basic tenet of many CAM therapies is holism, which is also fundamental to the nursing practice. Nurses adopt CAM therapies because these offer additional treatment options for patients and help promote patients’ well-being. However, the lack of sufficient knowledge and training, institutional support, and a clear organizational policy related to the use of CAM by nurses, and limited scientific evidence to support its usage have been reported as the main barriers to the utilization of CAM. In this light, recommendations will be made in order to “bridge the bench and bedside” for complementary and alternative care. Advanced Nursing Practice should expand its scope to include practice in CAM beyond what may traditionally be viewed as nursing. The further development of continuing education opportunities and the strengthening of the nursing curricula that focus on alternative modalities should also be advanced in order to support this practice in clinical settings.

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