



CAM (complementary and alternative medicine) and the role of the medical chambers

Česká lékařská komora

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What role does CAM play in your country?

- It is tolerated as a necessary evil.
- We must acknowledge that there is a demand for such services among a portion of the population.
- A certain minority of physicians provide similar services for direct payments from patients.
- Most commonly, these services involve homeopathy or acupuncture.

Is CAM included in any curriculum of physician specialty training?

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- No

Does your chamber have a position on CAM?

If yes, how do you deal with it?

- The Czech Medical Chamber (CMC) holds the position that it is better for so-called alternative methods to be offered by physicians who have medical education and who take full responsibility for their work, rather than by healers without any professional qualifications. During the time of the COVID-19 epidemic, many of these "alternative" individuals became the most aggressive anti-vaxxers and deniers of the effectiveness of epidemic control measures. It demonstrated how dangerous they can be.
- It would be desirable to tighten the laws; however, the problem lies in the fact that influential politicians with "anti-vax" positions also exist within the current ruling coalition parties.
- The CMC provides on its website a compilation of various alternative medicine methods for public information. For these methods, their effectiveness has not been proven.
- As part of its lifelong education system, the CMC does not accredit events focused on so-called alternative medicine.

Is there a system or legal framework to prevent misinformation?

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- There are no regulations in place. Alternative medicine (CAM) is usually offered as so-called "advisory services."
 - All healthcare providers - physicians who offer medical services must be members of the CMC.
 - Alternative medicine (CAM) is often labelled as advisory services, and such services do not necessarily have to follow the rules applicable to healthcare facilities.
 - In cases of health damage, trusting patients face difficulty in seeking any compensation or penalties for practitioners.
 - Additionally, deceived patients often feel ashamed and usually don't seek any satisfaction or redress.