

Presentation:

A NO/LOW COST MODEL FOR PROMOTING AND PROVIDING HOLISTIC HEALTHCARE TO MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES OF LOW INCOME FAMILIES, HOMELESS PEOPLE AND PEOPLE IN RECOVERY

Organizing Organization: Herban Health, a nonprofit organization founded in 2004 by local community members in order to provide and promote community based holistic healthcare to the medically underserved in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Website: <http://www.herbanhealthepa.org>

Contact information:

Dyanne Ladine, LAc, JD, MBA, MS, Herban Health, 1765 East Bayshore Road Unit 205, East Palo Alto, CA 94303 Vice President of Operations (650) 327-7894 dladine@aol.com

Choy-Pik Chiu, LAc, MS, PhD, Better Health Acupuncture & Herbs, 4155 Moorpark Ave., # 19, San Jose, CA 95117 Volunteer coordinator (408) 316-9048

Emily Shore, L.Ac., M.S. Clinic Organizer, Acupuncture Tune Up, 2229 Santa Clara Ave Suite B, Alameda CA, 94501 (510) 545-2283

Abstract:

The use of holistic healthcare based on Chinese medicine and documentation of its clinical efficacy have both increased significantly in the US. However, general availability of such healthcare services, usually involving one-on-one acupuncture/herbal treatments, has been limited by the significant cost to the individual patient and/or health insurance companies.

We have developed a no/low cost model for providing and promoting holistic healthcare to medically underserved people by working with patients in a group setting and collaborating with local community organizations (CBO). Our target population is the extended East Palo Alto, CA, residents, particularly those in drug/alcohol recovery, homeless people and low income families. Our free bilingual services include group auricular acupuncture, smaller group full body acupuncture, therapeutic massages and health education classes.

Currently, we are serving 50-100 people per week using volunteers at donated space from several CBO's. We will describe how our acupuncture clinics and holistic health classes are set up and report on the demographics and treatment frequency of our patient population.

Additionally, 3 case reports will be discussed with emphasis on the influence of support from peers, family and communities on clinical outcomes.

This model tests how holistic healthcare can be introduced into similar communities and be effective and efficient at meeting the needs of our diverse population, despite limited resources. We found that involving CBO's and encouraging client ownership of health issues are critical in improving client satisfaction and efficacy of treatments.

Key Features of Our Model

1. Holistic healthcare services: TCM based diagnosis, acupuncture, herbs, massages, health education classes (e.g. nutrition, exercise, meditation, and yoga).
2. Target population: medically underserved people, particularly those in drug/alcohol recovery, homeless people, low income families.
3. All services are FREE.
4. Emphasizes on understanding and addressing the needs of the patients within the confines of their living situations.
5. To reach our patients and to have them be a major participant, we work directly with and within existing community organizations (e.g. Ravenswood family health center, Ecumenical Hunger Program, InnVision (provides homeless shelters), Free At Last (provides help for ex-addicts).
6. No/Low cost: services are provided by volunteers and funded by donations; venues provided rent-free at community organizations.

Free Clinic Services

In our 7th year of operation, Herban Health has set up collaborations with 4 different local CBO to provide **FREE** clinic services and education classes on their sites. We currently offer 7 different ear clinics and 2 community clinics on a weekly basis.

Schedule

Ear clinics:

- Tues 8:30-10:30 am at Ecumenical Hunger Program
- Thurs 8:30-10:30 am at InnVision/Clara Mateo Alliance homeless shelter
- Sat 8:30-noon at Ravenswood Health Center
- Mon 7-8:30 pm, Wed 1-2:30 pm at Free At Last

Community Acupuncture:

- Tues, Fri 1-5 pm at Ecumenical Hunger Program

A typical patient visit at the Ear Clinic

1. Patient registers and fills out a medical history form.
2. Patient sits in a chair in a group setting, cleans ears with alcohol pads.
3. After brief explanation of acupuncture, patient receives ear acupuncture (**NADA** protocol: a five point ear acupuncture protocol specifically designed to help relieve stress, reduce cravings and strengthen functions of major organs).
4. Practitioner conducts a brief intake, performs tongue and pulse diagnosis, and then administers additional needles on the ears and body as needed.
5. As appropriate, practitioner provides nutritional advice, herbs and other types of lifestyle options.
6. Patient relaxes with needles for 30 min or more.
7. Practitioner removes needles and provides ear seeds as needed.

Patient Visits and Demographics

At Ravenswood Health Center, the ear clinic is held every Saturday morning for 3.5 hours.

In 2009, we have provided acupuncture to 1418 people in 42 weeks, (averaging 34 people/week)

Frequency of Visits*

Over 65% of patients came back for a return visit, and on average, each patient returned for 4.4 visits

of visits # of patients

1 77

2-5 109

6-33 59

*based on detailed documentation of 248 patients who came for a total of 1089 visits

Demographics

Gender: Female : Male = 3 : 1 (or 76% female)

Ethnicity: Majority is of Latino Heritage; others include African Americans, Whites and Pacific Islanders

Age: >70% are 31-60 years old

Age Distribution:

<u>Age</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
11-20	6	3.4
21-30	24	13.7
31-40	47	26.9
41-50	38	21.7
51-60	41	23.4
62-70	8	4.6
71-80	6	3.4
<u>81-90</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2.9</u>

Case Studies

R.C. Male, Age: 58

Chief complaints: Depressed, Fatigue and Poor Digestion

Symptoms (history): R.C. is HCV positive and first came to the clinic 6 years ago. He was very depressed over recent diagnosis of HCV.

Treatments: We provided him access to Misha Cohen, expert on Hepatitis C and Chinese Medicine. Since then, he has made use of massage, as well as clinics in at least 2 locations, where we give him regular acupuncture treatment and at cost herbs. He has developed a relationship with the organization, other patients and staff, which has provided him both health and social support.

Outcome: R.C. is emotionally stable and although he continues with a high viral load, he is symptom free. He is now functioning at a very high level and continues working as an employee of a participating community organization. We continue to make sure he does his lab work, sees his M.D. and gets consultations with the HCV specialist regularly.

Patient feedback: The Herbal Health clinics saved me from disability and uselessness, to a hard working healthy, productive person and they continue to help me maintain my health.

I.T. Female, Age: 36

Chief complaints: Stress, depressed, Insomnia

Symptoms (History): She was diagnosed with thyroid disease but was unable to tolerate the western medicines. She was not sleeping and was having a very hard time managing her 5 children and her demanding job. She was not able to afford private HH providers.

Treatments: I.T. is being treated with acupuncture and herbs. She and her husband come regularly to the clinics and participate in meditation classes.

Outcome: I.T. has changed her life around and although she still has stress and still has some trouble sleeping, she is able to function very well in her daily life. In addition, she and her husband have gathered together with other patients of Herban Health to give a garage sale and raised money for the work of Herban Health. This has created a new network of friends that has been very rewarding for her.

Patient feedback: I was very depressed with headache and body ache. My uncle recommended me the acupuncture. The acupuncture helped me a lot. Thanks to the acupuncture I feel better. The acupuncture is a very good thing.

T.H. Female, Age: 63

Chief complaints: Stress, fatigue

Symptoms (History): T.H. has had multiple family problems, including a son who was killed and two children with some form of bipolar disease. She herself tends to depression with times of hyperactivity.

Treatments: She comes regularly to three of our clinics and also makes use of the services provided by the organizations (e.g. homeless shelter, hunger program) where they are offered.

Outcome: She has found that being able to come to the clinics helps her feel better and provides a place for her to get some relief from her many stressors.

Patient Feedback: These clinics have given me relief from and healing of major parts of my body, and thus added to healing and strength over all for over 3 years now.