

Research Advances in Traditional & Alternative Medicine: Progressing to the Future

Dr Jaspal Kaur, MD, MHA

Traditional and Complementary Medicine Division, Ministry of Health, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Although conventional medicine is the mainstream healthcare system in Malaysia, traditional and complementary medicine (T&CM) continues to be practiced as it is in high demand due to the rich ethnic diversity and cultural beliefs of the Malaysian society.

The Ministry of Health's (MOH) efforts to develop T&CM is guided by a vision that one-day T&CM and modern medicine shall harmoniously co-exist to enhance the health and quality of life of all Malaysians. The various endeavours of the MOH aim to professionalise the industry so that all T&CM products and services are of the highest safety and quality.

From the 1990s, Malaysia had already established a system for registering traditional medicine products which falls under the jurisdiction of the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority. Malaysia has since progressed with the enforcement of the T&CM Act 2016 which regulates the practice and practitioners of T&CM in Malaysia and registration of T&CM practitioners by the operation under the T&CM Regulations 2021.

This recent achievement has catalysed the industry's transformation into a standardised and professional arena. Research continues to be one of the MOH's priorities so that evidence-based medicine complements the progressive development of T&CM in Malaysia.