Strategic Thinking on Strengthening Construction of National Emergency Prevention and Control System of TCM for Major Infectious Diseases

TONG Xiaolin
Guang’anmen Hospital, China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences, Beijing 100053, China

See next page for additional authors

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Strategic Thinking on Strengthening Construction of National Emergency Prevention and Control System of TCM for Major Infectious Diseases

Abstract

COVID-19 epidemic is still raging globally, while China has not only controlled the spread of the epidemic in time, but domestic production and life have gradually recovered. China's epidemic prevention and control work achieved strategic results, and the full participation of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) has become the highlight of the works. However, confronting of sudden major infectious diseases, the emergency reserves and emergency capabilities of TCM are insufficient, especially in the rapid emergency response mechanism, emergency treatment system, professional personnel training, emergency scientific research system and platform construction, and emergency strategic resource reserve. Strengthening the construction of the TCM emergency prevention and control system for major infectious diseases can not only improve the emergency prevention and control capabilities of major public health emergencies in China, but also an inevitable demand to protect the people's personal safety and health. Here we referred to the practice of TCM fighting against COVID-19, analyzed the problems to be solved or improved, consequently suggested on how to strengthen the national emergency prevention and control system of major infectious diseases.

Keywords

sudden major infectious disease; traditional Chinese medicine (TCM); emergency prevention and control system; strategic thinking; COVID-19; Wuchang pattern

Authors

TONG Xiaolin, ZHU Xiangdong, ZHAO Linhua, Li Qingwei, LEI Ye, SONG Bin, SHAO Jianzhu, WANG Qiang, LI Xiuyang, ZHENG Yujiao, and FAN Aihan

Corresponding Author(s)

TONG Xiaolin ¹

¹ Guang'anmen Hospital, China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences, Beijing 100053, China

TONG Xiaolin Academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences; Internal Medicine Scientist of traditional Chinese medicine; Chief Researcher of the China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences; Chief Physician. In fighting against COVID-19 epidemic, he served as an expert of the central steering group and leader of the medical treatment expert group of the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine. He has won the Ho Leung Ho Lee Science and Technology Progress Award, two second prizes of National Science and Technology Progress Award, and won the Second National Innovation Competition Award Medal for his outstanding contribution to the fight against COVID-19. He has edited 26 monographs including Diagnosis and Treatment of COVID-19 in Traditional Chinese Medicine, Tangluo Zabing Lun, etc., and published 306 papers, including 75 SCI papers, as correspondence or as the first author. E-mail: tongxiaolin@vip.163.com

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Strategic Thinking on Strengthening the Construction of National Emergency Prevention and Control System of TCM for Major Infectious Diseases

TONG Xiaolin 1, ZHU Xiangdong 2, ZHAO Linhua 1, Li Qingwei 1, LEI Ye 1, SONG Bin 4, SHAO Jianzhu 5, WANG Qiang 6, LI Xiuyang 1, ZHENG Yujiao 1, FAN Aihan 1

1. Guang ‘anmen Hospital, China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences, Beijing 100053, China; 2. Gansu University of Chinese Medicine, Lanzhou 730000, China; 3. The Second Affiliated Hospital of Shaanxi University of Chinese Medicine, Xi’anyang 712000, China; 4. The First People’s Hospital of Zunyi (The Third Affiliated Hospital of Zunyi Medical University), Zunyi 563000, China; 5. Xiditou Town Community Health Service Center, Beichen District, Tianjin City, Tianjin 300408, China; 6. Northeast International Hospital, Shenyang 110623, China

Abstract: COVID-19 epidemic is still raging globally, while China has not only controlled the spread of the epidemic in time but also gradually recovered domestic production and life. China’s epidemic prevention and control work achieved strategic results, and the full participation of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) has become the highlight of the works. However, confronting emerging infectious diseases, the emergency reserves and emergency response capabilities of TCM are insufficient, especially in the rapid emergency response mechanism, emergency treatment system, professional personnel training, emergency research system and platform construction, and emergency strategic resource reserve. Strengthening the construction of the TCM emergency prevention and control system for major infectious diseases can not only improve the emergency prevention and control capabilities against major public health emergencies in China, but also is an inevitable demand to protect people’s personal safety and health. Here we referred to the practice of TCM fighting against COVID-19, analyzed the problems to be solved, and consequently suggested on how to strengthen the national emergency prevention and control system of major infectious diseases. DOI: 10.16418/j.issn.1000-3045.20200808001-en

Keywords: emerging infectious disease; Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM); emergency prevention and control system; strategic thinking; COVID-19; Wuchang Pattern

COVID-19 epidemic is still raging globally. As of 16:00 (Beijing time) on August 16, 2020, the confirmed cases of COVID-19 have reached 21.29 million, and the cases of death have exceeded 0.76 million [1]. In the face of this major public health emergency, the public health emergency support system of China and even that of the whole world has suffered a serious impact. With the efforts from the government and the people, China has not only controlled the spread of the epidemic in the country but also gradually recovered the domestic production and life. China’s epidemic prevention and control work achieved strategic results, and the full participation of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), in addition to the tracking and quarantining of high-risk individuals, cancelling of public assembly, and limitation of population flow, has become the highlight of the work.

Since the foundation of the People’s Republic of China, the leaders of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the country have paid great attention to the inheritance and development of TCM and insisted on the coordinated development of TCM and western medicine. Therefore, TCM has been developing rapidly and playing a role in the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases including epidemic encephalitis B, influenza A (H1N1), epidemic hemorrhagic fever, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), and COVID-19. The participation of TCM in the prevention and control of SARS has confirmed that the early intervention of TCM can block the disease progress, alleviate the clinical symptoms, shorten the fever duration, promote the inflammatory absorption, and reduce the dosage of hormones [2]. In the prevention and control of COVID-19, TCM quickly participated in the whole process of treatment and exerted the advantages of prevention before disease, prevention of disease progression, and prevention of relapse after cure. With the framework of General TCM Prescription + Community + Internet, the innovative community control mechanism of Wuchang Pattern emerged. This pattern allowed the timely treatment of numerous patients in the context of no specific drugs, which reflects the therapeutic advantage of TCM and contributes Chinese wisdom and Chinese approach to the global anti-epidemic activities [3]. However, confronting
emerging infectious diseases, the emergency reserves and emergency response capabilities of TCM are insufficient, especially in the rapid emergency response mechanism, emergency treatment system, professional personnel training, emergency research system and platform construction, and emergency strategic resource reserve. These shortcomings limit the construction of emergency prevention and control system of TCM and the improvement of treatment capability of TCM against emerging infectious diseases. Therefore, it is imperative to strengthen the construction of TCM emergency prevention and control system for emerging infectious diseases.

1 Necessity and urgency to strengthen the construction of TCM emergency prevention and control system for emerging infectious diseases

1.1 Distinctive characteristics and advantages of TCM in the prevention and treatment of emerging infectious diseases

TCM is characterized by the unique theoretical knowledge and rich practical experience in the prevention and treatment of acute infectious diseases. China has experienced multiple outbreaks of infectious diseases in history, such as the smallpox in the Northern and Southern Dynasties, the malaria and leprosy in the Tang Dynasty, the plague in the Ming Dynasty, and the cholera in the Qing Dynasty. Since the Western Han Dynasty, a total of 321 epidemics have occurred in China [4]. It is through the struggles against such epidemics that rich practical experience of TCM has been accumulated. Treatise on Cold Damage and Miscellaneous Diseases was written by Zhang Zhongjing in the Eastern Han Dynasty on the basis of the observation and treatment of typhoid fever, which created the six-meridian syndrome differentiation. Several centuries later, Ge Hong wrote the first emergency manual of TCM, A Handbook of Prescriptions for Emergency. This book is a collection of single prescriptions and proved prescriptions for the treatment of epidemics, some of which have far-reaching impacts on later generations. Tu Youyou was inspired by the treatment of malaria using fresh juice of Artemisia annua recorded in this book and improved the extraction method of artemisinin, curing millions of malaria patients [5]. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, plagues were frequent in China. Wu Youke first put forward the etiological view of pestilent qi. TCM physicians including Ye Tianshi and Wu Jutong have established the defense–qi-nutrient–blood syndrome differentiation system and triple-energizer syndrome differentiation system, promoting the maturation of the TCM prevention and control against epidemics gradually from theory to clinical application.

Owing to its distinctive features and advantages, TCM has contributed to the prevention and treatment of major diseases in recent years, especially in the fighting against COVID-19. The white paper Fighting COVID-19: China in Action reports that Chinese herbal formulas and drugs were administered to 92 percent of all confirmed cases, and in Hubei Province, more than 90 percent of confirmed cases received TCM treatment that proved effective [6]. The TCM treatment protocol was included in the Diagnosis and Treatment Protocol for Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia(Trial Versions 3–7) jointly published by the National Health Commission and the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine [7].

TCM has shown unique advantages in the whole process of treating COVID-19. For example, for a large number of suspected cases and individuals with close contact to patients, the rapid development of the epidemic has been successfully blocked through the large-scale use of Hanshiyi Formula (Wuhan anti-COVID-19 Formula No. 1, hereinafter referred to as the Formula) in advance. As of March 2, 2020, a total of 723 thousand bags of the Formula have been released in Wuhan and treated over 50 000 patients. The data from the Health Commission of Wuchang District showed that after 14 days of medicine delivery, the number of newly confirmed cases dropped sharply for the first time and maintained at a low level, demonstrating that early intervention with TCM not only protected the susceptible population but also reduced the incidence within the high-risk population [8]. For mild patients, TCM intervention can effectively reduce the rate of conversion to severe cases. A retrospective cohort study on 721 mild and moderate COVID-19 patients treated with the Formula showed that TCM reduced the rate of conversion to severe cases from mild and moderate cases. Among them, none of the 430 patients who received the Formula progressed, while 19 cases (19/325, 6.5%) in the control group progressed to severe cases [9]. For severe patients, TCM intervention reduced the death rate and improved the cure rate. A retrospective cohort study of 662 severe cases carried out in Wuhan Hospital of Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine showed that the mortality risk of TCM intervention group decreased by 87.7% [10]. In addition, TCM promoted the recovery and reduced the risk of positive reoccurrence of convalescents. A retrospective cohort study of 420 convalescents with TCM intervention showed that the positive reoccurrence rate of TCM intervention group was 2.8% (9/325), while that of the control group was 15.8% (15/95) [10]. Therefore, strengthening the development of TCM emergency prevention and control system for major health emergencies and improving the service capacity of TCM in the prevention and treatment of major epidemics will make China more calm in the face of new emerging infectious diseases.

1.2 Severe situation of prevention and control of emerging and chronic infectious diseases

Many infectious diseases, including viral hepatitis, tuberculosis, syphilis, and AIDS, are still widespread. Due to
environmental changes, population mobility, increase of drug-resistant strains, and emerging of unknown pathogenic microorganisms, it is difficult to prevent and control some acute and chronic infectious diseases that have already been controlled. Since the 1970s, major infectious diseases have been emerging at the rate of one or more per year, including SARS in 2003, influenza A (H1N1) in 2009, and COVID-19, which remain a major threat to human health. In the new era, how to deal with emerging infectious diseases and control existing infectious diseases and drug-resistant pathogens are the major challenges for human medicine. TCM has unique theoretical systems and treatment approaches. In the face of emerging infectious diseases, TCM can provide unique and effective treatment strategies, prescriptions, and technologies with the advantages of rapid response, rapid treatment, and therapeutic curative effect before the development of effective drugs and vaccines.

1.3 Strengthening the prevention and control system of TCM for emerging infectious diseases to satisfy the demand of people’s life safety and health

China puts people’s health and safety at the top priority. Safeguarding the safety and health of people is the foundation for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation. TCM is an important weapon for fighting infectious diseases which pose a serious long-term threat to human beings. Practice has demonstrated that the construction of public health system needs the participation of TCM. The rapid intervention of TCM and western medicine is the basis for improving the rate of receiving and curing patients and reducing infection rate and death rate, as well as a key to the overcoming of major epidemics. Strengthening the construction of the TCM emergency prevention and control system for emerging infectious diseases not only improves the capability of TCM to serve health together with modern science and technology but also conforms to the strategic deployment of the Healthy China. General Secretary Xi Jinping made important instructions on the work of TCM, “We must follow the law of TCM development, inherit the essence, and make innovations while adhering to the core…” Therefore, strengthening the development of the prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases by TCM is the embodiment of TCM essence and the innovation on the TCM control mechanism against major epidemics.

2 Construction of the national TCM emergency prevention and control system

2.1 Current situation

After the SARS epidemic in 2003, China has gradually established a relatively perfect national health emergency prevention and control system, in which the advantages and functions of TCM in public health emergency work have been preliminarily reflected. In 2009, the Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Deepening the Reform of the Medical and Health System clearly stated to give full play to the role of TCM (ethnic medicine) in disease prevention and control, response to public health emergencies, and medical services. The Notice on Giving Full Play to the Role of TCM in Health Emergency Work issued in the same year required that the TCM administrations at all levels should set up the leadership system as well as a team of TCM experts for public emergencies. The Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases (2013 Amendment) stipulates to develop modern medicine and TCM, support and encourage scientific research on the prevention and control of infectious diseases, and improve the science and technologies on the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases. The Law of the People’s Republic of China on Traditional Chinese Medicine promulgated in 2016 clearly requires that the people’s governments at or above the county level should apply TCM in the management of public health emergencies, and strengthen the reserve of emergency supplies, equipment, facilities, technologies, and human resources of TCM.

Relevant departments of TCM have actively promoted the preliminary establishment of the TCM emergency prevention and control system in line with national policies. Since 2006, the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine has set more than 200 hospitals in China as the clinical bases for TCM prevention and treatment of infectious diseases. In 2012, the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine established a leading group for TCM response to public emergencies. In accordance with the principles of the integration of TCM and western medicine, integration of resources, unified leadership, and close cooperation, the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine directed the participation of TCM system in the response to public emergencies. During the 13th Five-Year Plan Period, the construction of TCM emergency prevention and control system, including national TCM emergency bases, national TCM clinical bases for the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases, provincial and municipal TCM emergency bases, and emergency capacity of TCM hospitals, has been fostered. TCM has made great contributions to the prevention and control of SARS, influenza A (H1N1), and COVID-19, gradually exhibiting its unique advantages in the responses to emergencies.

2.2 Problems in the system construction

(1) The important role of TCM in the treatment of emerging infectious diseases has not been fully understood. Both in history and in modern times, TCM has made outstanding contributions to the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases and the management of health emergencies. However, it is believed for a long time that TCM has a slow therapeutic effect and cannot treat emergencies and...
infectious diseases. The public and some practitioners lack sufficient understanding on the emergency treatment ability of TCM, as well as the key role that TCM can play in the control of emerging infectious diseases. For example, TCM presents prominent efficacy in the treatment of COVID-19. However, the poor knowledge and ignorance of TCM efficacy restrict the early and in-depth participation of TCM.

(2) The emergency response mechanism and working system of TCM need to be improved. In the fighting against COVID-19, the emergency response of TCM has been very rapid compared with that in the past, whereas it still failed to respond or to participate in the epidemic prevention and control in the first time. For example, the TCM treatment protocol was not included in the Diagnosis and Treatment Protocol for Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia until the trial version 3 because of the lack of timely coordination between health administrations and the administrative departments of TCM, and the lack of information sharing among medical institutions at all levels. In the emergency response leading groups of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention of China and some health administrative departments, there are no departments of TCM or TCM physicians participating in disease control. Due to the lack of a sound response mechanism and emergency plan, TCM treatment has not been implemented in the first time in some regions. Some local TCM authorities have not yet established a leading group of TCM for the management of public emergencies. Some hospitals of TCM have not yet established a leading group and associated working group of TCM for the management of public emergencies. Besides, there is no perfect hospital emergency plan.

(3) The TCM emergency research system and professional personnel training need to be strengthened. At present, the scientific research ideas of TCM in response to emergency remain unclear. The lack of clinical research plan of TCM in response to major epidemics and the operation mechanism of unified leadership, unified command, close cooperation and coordination among organizations makes it difficult to carry out large-scale, multi-center clinical research, which makes it difficult to obtain high-quality evidence for the prevention and treatment of epidemics with TCM. In addition, the medical ethics and timeliness of emerging infectious diseases are special. It is still necessary to explore how to ensure the performing of scientific research without hindering the disease treatment so as to obtain beneficial research evidence. That is, the construction of scientific research methods of TCM in the case of emergency remains to be explored. The outbreak of COVID-19 exposed the unsound discipline system of TCM for disease prevention and control and the lack of professional TCM personnel. Specifically, a mature discipline system of TCM or integrated TCM and western medicine for epidemic prevention and control has not been formed; the professional personnel training of TCM epidemiology has not attracted the general attention of medical colleges/universities of TCM; young and middle-aged clinical experts and research staff in this field are scarce, and most first-line personnel are transferred from various clinical departments, which demonstrates the lack of professionals with proficient use of TCM skills for the treatment of major emerging epidemics.

(4) The construction of TCM emergency research platform and the emergency TCM reserve management need to be strengthened. The absence of large database and platform of TCM has hindered the prevention and control of COVID-19. For example, the lack of infectious disease clinical research base and biosafety level 3 (P3) laboratory in the field of TCM makes it impossible to independently carry out experiments such as virus infection modeling, which limits the screening of potentially effective Chinese medicinal materials. In addition, the construction and improvement of TCM platforms for the early warning and prevention of diseases, the sharing of epidemic information, and screening of efficient drug are in urgent need. The resources reserve of TCM is national strategic material, while the scientific and technological support and reserve capacity are still limited. It is urgent to establish a national anti-epidemic procurement and supply platform of Chinese medicinal materials, a normalized management system for planting area, quality control, storage, and processing of anti-epidemic core medicinal materials, and a digital management system for reserved drugs.

3 Strengthening the construction of the TCM emergency prevention and control system with Chinese characteristics

In view of the problems discussed above, we should hold the core principle of maintaining the correct and evolving the new. First, we should fully understand the necessity and urgency of the construction of TCM emergency prevention and control system for emerging infectious diseases. On the basis of the anti-epidemic experience in the past, we should identify the bottlenecks in the construction of TCM emergency prevention and control system. Second, it is necessary to establish the TCM emergency prevention and control system based on the basic conditions and the actual needs of future application. In particular, it is necessary to combine peacetime and wartime to build a long-term anti-epidemic mechanism of TCM with the assistance of modern science and technology. Efforts should be made to improve policy support, prevent and control of epidemics, and guarantee people’s life, thereby giving full play to the advantages of the therapeutic effect, inheriting the experience and wisdom, and releasing the vitality of TCM in the prevention and treatment of emerging infectious diseases.

3.1 Improving the laws and regulations of TCM emergency management

The relevant laws and regulations of TCM should be
revised and integrated into the national law and regulation system for the management of public health emergencies. In the revision of Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Prevention and Treatment of Infectious Diseases, Emergency Response Law of the People’s Republic of China, Regulations on Preparedness for and Response to Emergent Public Health Hazards, and Plan of Public Health Emergencies of Medical Rescue, it is suggested to adhere to the principle of emphasizing and integrating TCM and western medicine to establish a public health emergency management system with the cooperation between TCM and western medicine. The construction of TCM prevention and control system needs to be improved and integrated into the corresponding laws and regulations, which will provide legal protection and further strengthen the dominant position of TCM in response to major public health emergencies.

3.2 Establishing and improving the emergency response and working mechanism of TCM

(1) In terms of emergency response mechanism, it is necessary to establish a hierarchical emergency response mechanism of TCM. According to the severity of emerging infectious diseases, a hierarchical TCM emergency response mechanism should be established and connected with the hierarchical emergency response mechanism established by the health administrative department. The start-up mechanism, emergency measures, and termination mechanism of TCM participating in the prevention and control of public health emergencies should be perfected. Besides, it is essential to clarify the specific requirements of hierarchical response of TCM administrative departments and TCM medical institutions at all levels, and to formulate and implement the hierarchical TCM system for the management of epidemics.

(2) In terms of emergency working mechanism, it is necessary to clarify and strengthen the functions of TCM departments at all levels in public health emergency management, and endow them with certain functions including overall planning and coordination, supplies allocation, emergency rescue, and prevention research in the face of epidemics. A bottom-up emergency reporting system of TCM institutions at all levels need to be established to carry out early warning. In addition, health authorities at all levels, administrative departments of TCM, and medical institutions at all levels should enhance information sharing.

3.3 Establishing an integrated emergency management mechanism with the coordination of TCM and western medicine

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the CPC Central Committee has deployed and called for the cooperation of TCM and western medicine with full play of the advantages of both sides in the treatment. It is the implementation of this decision that makes the Formula in Wuchang District of Wuhan City be quickly distributed to susceptible population and mild and moderate patients, thereby protecting high-risk population and delaying or blocking the progression of mild cases to severe and critical cases. An integrated emergency management mechanism with the coordination of TCM and western medicine by the government ensures the TCM intervention in the first time and in the whole process of treatment. In this way, the experience and wisdom of TCM will be fully exerted in the practice. Under this premise, the collaborative emergency treatment mechanism of TCM and western medicine should be strengthened in the following three aspects. First, it is suggested to integrate TCM into the construction of public health law system and clarify the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of TCM in the construction of emergency prevention and control system. Second, in the centralized, unified, and efficient guiding system, the joint prevention and control mechanism should be optimized to give full play of TCM in combination with western medicine in the case of epidemics. Third, TCM should be integrated into the disease prevention and control system to exert its functions in risk detection, reporting, early warning, response, and treatment of major public health events.

3.4 Establishing a long-term anti-epidemic mechanism of TCM+ on the basis of Wuchang Pattern

The development of TCM can be assisted with modern science and technology. The formation of Wuchang Pattern is inspired by the medical thought of prevention before disease onset. Since there is no effective drug or vaccine for COVID-19, a large number of high-risk individuals cannot get timely diagnosis and treatment. The Wuchang Pattern formed based on the framework of General TCM Formula + Community + Internet moved the focus of prevention and control to the community, which not only greatly reduced the incidence of susceptible population but also prevented the aggravation of mild disease and provided real-time data support. The core of Wuchang Pattern is to uncover the pathogenesis and progression rule of COVID-19, and to determine the general treatment plan (i.e., the general formula). Large-scale rapid centralized medication to the patients and susceptible population in the community cut off the further spread of the disease. The TCM management platform established a communication channel between patients in the isolation area, front-line anti-epidemic personnel, community doctors, expert teams, and volunteers, and collected and reported the data from the front-line epidemic prevention and control in real time. In the context of normalized epidemic prevention and control, Wuchang Pattern provided feasible and standard model for the participation of TCM in epidemic prevention and control and the establishment of a long-term anti-epidemic mechanism of TCM.
3.5 Strengthening the construction of TCM emergency research system and infrastructure platform

(1) Construction of TCM emergency research system. It is necessary to improve the research system of TCM in response to emerging infectious diseases, which is led by the national TCM research platform and supported by the provincial TCM scientific research platform. Special funds can be allocated to establish a national-level TCM research institute for the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases and accelerate the construction of TCM research infrastructure and P3 laboratory within the TCM system on the basis of existing research institutes and hospitals. Besides, special projects on the prevention and control of public health emergencies with TCM can be supported. A long-term funding mechanism can be developed for the prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases with TCM.

(2) Construction of infrastructure platform. The COVID-19 epidemic should be taken as an opportunity to integrate the existing data resources and build an epidemic early warning platform with the TCM characteristics. The combination of TCM with modern meteorology and other disciplines can deepen the research on the TCM principle for prediction of epidemics. Furthermore, a scientific and practical TCM platform for epidemic prediction and achievement transformation can be established. The screening platform of Chinese medicinal materials (including effective ingredients) can be built. A number of effective prescriptions and medicinals for the treatment of epidemics can be screened out on the basis of ancient literature, epidemic big data, and high-throughput screening. In addition, research projects can be arranged to carry out TCM research on dose–efficacy–toxicity and accelerate the development of Chinese medicinals for disease prevention and treatment.

3.6 Developing the discipline system and talent team of TCM emergency management

(1) Discipline system. First, the construction of key disciplines such as preventive TCM, TCM epidemiology, TCM emergency medicine, and TCM pulmonology should be supported for the cultivation of academic leaders and professional teams. Efforts should be made to the TCM discipline construction, and experts can be organized to clarify the connotation of each discipline, standardize the terminology, formulate the syllabus, and enrich the content of each course. Second, the integrated development of TCM and western medicine needs to be promoted for the response to epidemics and explore the construction of a new discipline of disease prevention and control with TCM characteristics. Third, academic groups on epidemic prevention and control can be built to integrate local resources as well as promote experience sharing and long-term development of disciplines.

(2) Talent team. It is recommended to increase the proportion of classical anti-epidemic theory courses on epidemic febrile diseases and set up courses such as TCM epidemics and theory of qi movement. The talent training programs for the departments of respiratory diseases, infectious diseases, and critical medicine of TCM hospitals should be set to train a group of leading talents and backbone talents of TCM emergency. Further, relevant departments can coordinate to give policy preference in the cultivation, welfare, evaluation, and motivation of TCM emergency talents.

3.7 Strengthening the production and strategic reserve of TCM emergency resources

In order to ensure that TCM can participate in the prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases in the first time and in depth, we should strengthen the production and strategic reserve of TCM emergency resources. First, the relevant departments of TCM should organize the compilation of the national inventory of TCM emergency supplies, which should be incorporated into the integrated emergency logistics system of military, civilian, and local governments to improve the effective scheduling of TCM emergency resources and other health resources. Second, efforts should be made to the reserve and allocation of TCM emergency resources on the basis of grassroots communities and provide basic medical services to the public in time [13]. (3) It is essential to enhance the reserve and production of anti-epidemic TCM resources, and timely dispatch the emergency resources according to the specific situation after the occurrence of public emergencies. Health administrations and TCM administrations at all levels should carry out emergency training and drills regularly, equip necessary facilities and equipment, and research and popularize the emergency technology with TCM characteristics, thereby giving full play to them in clinical practice in the face of health emergencies.

3.8 Enhancing the international cooperation and communication on major public health emergencies

Viruses have no national boundaries, and epidemics spread regardless of races. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that the COVID-19 outbreak once again showed that mankind is a community with a shared future. In the era of economic globalization, such a major emergency will not be the last to come [14]. To strengthen the construction of TCM emergency prevention and control system for emerging infectious diseases, we should promote the international exchange and cooperation of TCM for emergency management. The diagnosis and treatment protocols and practical experience of TCM in fighting against emerging infectious diseases should be shared with the international community to strengthen the overseas publicity of anti-epidemic by TCM and enhance the acceptance of TCM by the governments and people of other countries. Meanwhile, we should actively participate in the prevention and control of global pandemics and emergency management. TCM advantages in the treatment of convalescents and the non-drug therapies (including
acupuncture, moxibustion, massage, Gongfa, and medicated diet) with high acceptance in foreign countries, which, after being confirmed to be effective, should be formulated into guidelines for the popularization overseas as soon as possible. In addition, it is essential to strengthen the research cooperation on major epidemics and establish a long-term mechanism to boost the research on epidemic prevention and treatment of TCM with the technical advantages of developed countries.

References


(Translated by XING Y)

TONG Xiaolin corresponding author, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Internal Medicine Scientist of traditional Chinese medicine, Chief Professor of the China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences, Chief Physician. In fighting against COVID-19 epidemic, he served as an expert of the central steering group and leader of the medical treatment expert group of the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine. He has won the Ho Leung Ho Lee Science and Technology Progress Award, two second prizes of National Science and Technology Progress Award, and the Second National Innovation Competition Award Medal for his outstanding contribution to the fight against COVID-19. He has edited 26 monographs including Diagnosis and Treatment of COVID-19 in Traditional Chinese Medicine, and published 306 papers, including 75 SCI papers, as corresponding or the first author. E-mail: tongxiaolin@vip.163.com