



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION of
ACUPUNCTURE and ORIENTAL MEDICINE

PO Box 162340
Sacramento, CA 95816
866-455-7999
916-443-4766 Fax
www.aaaomonline.org
info@aaaomonline.org

April 29, 2008

The Honorable George Abbott
Minister of Health, British Columbia
Room 337
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

**Subject: Statement of Support of the British Columbia Ministry of Health Decision to Extend
Acupuncture Insurance to Low-Income Populations**

The Honorable George Abbott:

The American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AAAOM) is the national association representing professional providers of acupuncture and Oriental medicine in the US.

The AAAOM applauds the British Columbia Ministry of Health for its far-thinking decision to extend the healing capacities of acupuncture, via public health insurance, to its low-income populations through the province's Medical Services Plan (MSP). Practitioners have long recognized that the health of individuals within a society depends on addressing homeostatic balance *before* the onset of disease. Acupuncture is a pan-systemic treatment model recognized by the WHO and the NIH for its efficacy. Clearly, any progressive approach to public health includes an investment in *preventative* health: an approach that is humane to people while equally healthy to government budgets and consideration of long-term health costs.

Your decision represents a bold precedent-setting policy decision that we believe will contribute to a broadening of health-care options, not only in B.C., but elsewhere in Canada and the United States. As such, we congratulate you on your ability to recognize the intrinsic value of this medicine and its well-established historic position— not only providing British Columbians with the ability to explore this alternative treatment option, but to equally stand at the forefront of institutionalizing acupuncture into mainstream healthcare in a world economy.

Yours in Health,

Martin Herbkersman, MTOM, DiplOM, DAc, FABORM
President, AAAOM