

## 2016 Acupuncturist Landmarks in Focus

- The CDC recommends nonpharmacologic therapy as frontline treatment for chronic pain.<sup>1</sup>
- Acupuncture is more effective than intravenous morphine in the Emergency Department,<sup>2</sup> according to a study published in the *Journal of Emergency Medicine*.
- A recommendation to establish a new code for this distinct occupation, “29-1291 Acupuncturists,” is made by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) Standard Occupational Classification Policy Committee (SOCPC).<sup>3</sup>
- When providing services in health system and hospital facilities within 43 states, licensed acupuncturists are credentialed as Licensed Independent Practitioners to be in compliance with The Joint Commission quality assurance standard for healthcare system accreditation.<sup>4</sup>
- 46 states regulate the profession [47 as of 3/2017], clearly defining educational, credentialing, and practice standards.<sup>5</sup>
- The Kansas Acupuncture Practice Act is signed into law by Governor Brownback in May 2016.<sup>6</sup> [Governor Matt Mead signs the Wyoming Acupuncture Practice Act into law in March 2017.<sup>7</sup> Proposed acupuncturist licensing laws are considered in the three remaining unregulated states.]
- The American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AAAOM) historic federal bills debut in the U.S. Congress as the “Acupuncture for Heroes and Seniors Act of 2015.” Sponsor Congresswoman Judy Chu champions the proposed law which permanently opens access to qualified licensed acupuncturists by veterans, military, seniors, disabled, and more.<sup>8</sup>
- Congress and the United States Department of Veteran Affairs modify the operating parameters of the temporary VA Choice Program, and TriWest receives approval in January 2016 to extend clinically authorized episodes of care as appropriate for certain conditions, from the previous 60 days, up to one year.<sup>9</sup> [Claim payments are brought current in January 2017.]<sup>9</sup>
- The AAAOM maintains a wide range of acupuncture efficacy studies on their official Facebook page.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Center for Disease Control. 2016 CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain. [Online]. [Cited: January 9, 2017.] <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/rr/rr6501e1.htm>

<sup>2</sup>Grissa, Baccouche, et al. Acupuncture vs intravenous morphine in the management of acute pain in the ED. *American Journal of Emergency Medicine*. 2016;34(11):2112-2116.

[http://www.ajemjournal.com/article/S0735-6757\(16\)30422-3/fulltext](http://www.ajemjournal.com/article/S0735-6757(16)30422-3/fulltext)

<sup>3</sup>Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) Standard Occupational Classification Policy Committee Standard Occupation Code Docket 2018 Response. [Online] [Cited: January 9, 2017.] [https://www.bls.gov/soc/2018/soc\\_2018\\_docket\\_responses.pdf](https://www.bls.gov/soc/2018/soc_2018_docket_responses.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>Gale, M. Hospital Practice: Recognition of Acupuncturist as a Licensed Independent Practitioner (LIP) *Meridians*. 2016; 3(4): 11-16. [Online] [Cited January 9, 2017] [http://www.meridiansjaom.com/files/MERIDIANSJAOM\\_A003.4.pdf](http://www.meridiansjaom.com/files/MERIDIANSJAOM_A003.4.pdf)

<sup>5</sup>Gale, M. Ho Hospital Practice: Recognition of Acupuncturist as a Licensed Independent Practitioner (LIP) *Meridians*. 2016; 3(4): 11-16. [Online] [Cited January 9, 2017] [http://www.meridiansjaom.com/files/MERIDIANSJAOM\\_A003.4.pdf](http://www.meridiansjaom.com/files/MERIDIANSJAOM_A003.4.pdf)

<sup>6</sup>Kansas Acupuncture Practice Act 2016. [Online] [Cited January 9, 2017] [http://www.kslegislature.org/li\\_2016/b2015\\_16/measures/hb2615/](http://www.kslegislature.org/li_2016/b2015_16/measures/hb2615/)

<sup>7</sup>Wyoming Acupuncture Practice Act 2017 [Online][Cited March 7, 2017] <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/2017/Enroll/HB0165.pdf>

<sup>8</sup>H.R.3849 (114<sup>th</sup>): Acupuncture for Heroes and Seniors Act of 2015. [Online] [Cited January 9, 2017.] <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr3849/text>

<sup>9</sup>TriWest [Online] [Cited March 7, 2017]

<https://vapccc.triwest.com/PCCCWeb/index.html#/provider-home>

<sup>10</sup><https://www.facebook.com/aaaomonline/>