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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT REGULATES TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE *Legislation Gives Ontarians Confidence In Alternative Health Care*

TORONTO – Legislation regulating the practice of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) has passed third and final reading and will become law once it receives Royal Assent, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“This legislation regulating traditional Chinese medicine will help ensure that Ontarians who choose alternative health care like TCM and acupuncture are receiving safe, quality care from practitioners who have recognized skills and training,” Smitherman said.

Upon Royal Assent, TCM will be the first new health profession to be regulated in the province since 1991. As a result of the legislation:

- A self-governing regulatory college will be created with the authority to set standards of practice and entry to practice requirements for the profession.
- The scope of practice will be defined so that the use of the title “doctor” by certain members of the profession will apply to practitioners who meet certain standards.
- The performance of acupuncture will be restricted to members of the new College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario, members of certain other regulated health professions and to persons who perform acupuncture within a health facility.

This legislation builds on MPP led consultations which resulted in a report released in 2005.

“I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the hard work of members on all sides of the Legislature who had a hand in making this legislation a reality, to the benefit of TCM practitioners, acupuncturists and Ontario patients,” said Smitherman.

Ontario becomes the second province in Canada (after British Columbia) to regulate traditional Chinese Medicine.

Traditional Chinese medicine is a holistic system of health care that originated in China several thousand years ago. Therapies include acupuncture, herbal therapy, tuina massage, and therapeutic exercise. TCM views the body as a whole and addresses how illness manifests itself in a patient and assesses and treats the whole patient, not just the specific disease.

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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