



International Society for Complementary Medicine Research

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The International Society for Complementary Medicine Research (ISCMR), being a cosponsor of the first European Congress for Integrative Medicine, is extremely glad that this conference is taking place and proud to be a cosponsor. ISCMR, a research society that unites more than 250 researchers in the area of complementary medical research world wide, has as its aim to foster collaboration between researchers and promote high quality research. Since its inception in 2003 the Society has grown steadily, attracted new members from all over the globe, and has cosponsored three international scientific conferences.

We see the fact that a European Integrative Medicine platform is developing as a clear sign for the fact that insights developed from within complementary medicine have made its way into the mainstream of medical practice and are being researched and used, because they carry great promises of usefulness and few side effects. Integrative Medicine speaks to the fact that medicine is at last taking in the voices of patients who demand a broader, holistic approach to patient care, and of complementary medicine practitioners who have pointed to the options they have to offer, mainly in the treatment of chronic diseases.

This Congress shows that enough knowledge and experience is already around to integrate complementary forms of treatment into existing models of care. Integration is a movement that goes both ways: new approaches are being integrated into existing models of care, and this integration will change the care and what is being integrated, creating something new. We hope that these new treatments will be better for patients, more holistic, safer and benefiting all. We also hope that the European Commission will take up this signal to finally include Complementary Therapies and Integrative Medicine in their research portfolio as high priority. All surveys show that integrative approaches are of importance to patients. This importance is not matched by the research funds available from public sources. We hope that this conference will contribute to raise awareness. The European Chapter of ISCMR, to be founded at this conference, documents that European researchers are at the forefront of the movement, and it is time that those in politics who profess to establish the excellence of European research start realising this fact and support it accordingly with funds.

Prof. Harald Walach, President of ISCMR