

Book Review

Clinicians' and Educators' Desk Reference on the Licensed Complementary and Alternative Healthcare Professions
Elizabeth Goldblatt, Pamela Snider, Sheila Quinn, & John Weeks
Seattle, WA: Academic Consortium for Complementary and Alternative Health Care, 2009
183 pp., \$24.96
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At least one-third of US adults routinely use complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) to treat their principal medical conditions, yet the majority of patients who use these therapies do not discuss them with their biomedical practitioners – and it is even rarer for CAM and biomedical health professionals to collaborate on the care of their mutual patients. This lack of interprofessional teamwork or interdisciplinary communication is not in patients' best interests. As an initial step in promoting better-integrated healthcare, the Academic Consortium for Complementary and Alternative Health Care (ACCAHC) has produced the *Clinicians' and Educators' Desk Reference (CEDR) on the Licensed Complementary and Alternative Healthcare Professions*. Designing the handbook to be a resource for clinicians, educators and students, the authors define and describe key CAM systems and professional groups in order to provide standards, as well as inform both biomedical and CAM practitioners of opportunities for multidisciplinary, comprehensive and integrative care. More specifically, the authors aim to foster cross-disciplinary respect and collaboration among biomedical and CAM health professionals in order to enhance the ability of practitioners to collaborate as teams.

CEDR is divided into three major sections, in addition to a set of appendices. The first section provides basic information on the fields of complementary and alternative healthcare systems, as well as introduces the authors' pedagogical premise, that "those who are educated together practice together." The second section provides a description of the historical context of ACCAHC's efforts to promote

dialog among practitioners of the array of distinctive healing systems in the USA. This section of the handbook includes a useful overview of recent efforts, as well as priority recommendations from national professional groups designed to increase interdisciplinary collaboration. The third section addresses the five licensed CAM professions (acupuncture and oriental medicine, chiropractic, massage therapy, direct-entry midwifery and naturopathic medicine) and includes the following information for each discipline: philosophy, mission and goals; characteristics and data; clinical care; integration activities; education; regulation and certification; research; challenges and opportunities; and resources. Each discipline-specific entry also contains recent citations, as well as a bibliography. The appendices address six related, but currently unlicensed, CAM professions (ayurvedic medicine, holistic medicine, holistic nursing, homeopathy, integrative medicine and yoga therapy). The material on each of the CAM professions – both licensed and as-yet unlicensed – is useful not only because it addresses the associated skills, approaches to patient care, education and accreditation, but also because, by using the same template for each profession, the reader can easily note similarities and differences among the disciplines.

The information *CEDR* contains is relevant to inter-professional education, practice and research, and the handbook will therefore be of interest to an interdisciplinary audience, including interprofessional teamwork researchers and educators, as well as biomedical and CAM health professionals, clinical researchers, healthcare policymakers and patients. *CEDR* is highly readable, informative and contains much practical information, and it has the potential to make a significant impact on interprofessional education in complementary and integrative medicine.

Shelley R. Adler
Professor

University of California, San Francisco, CA, USA.
E-mail: adlersh@ocim.ucsf.edu