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Malaysia unveils world's first traditional and herbal medicine research framework

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For successful development of herbal products with therapeutic claims



Malaysia’s Ministry of Health has recently launched the world’s first traditional and complementary medicine (T&CM) research framework together with a herbal medicinal research guideline.

The two documents would help traditional healthcare practitioners develop science-based studies on complementary and alternative medicines.

According to Malaysia's Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa who launched the two documents, the framework was developed as a guide for stakeholders who are interested in designing, evaluating and conducting T&CM research.

The World Health Organisation (WHO), which helped develop the T&CM framework, defines traditional medicine as the sum total of the knowledge, skills, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement, or treatment of physical and mental illness.

Some of the key topics covered by the framework are general considerations and requirements to conduct research in Malaysia that conforms to current guidelines and regulations, and specific considerations for T&CM research which delves more deeply into the principles and key components of T&CM research. This includes the conduct of clinical and pre-clinical research on T&CM procedure-based therapies and herbal medicine.