

The **second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine**, held in New Delhi, India, on 17–19 December 2025, has the theme of “Restoring balance: The science and practice of health and well-being”. The Summit aligns with the [Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034](#), which recognizes Traditional Medicine as a living science that contributes to universal health coverage, health equity and sustainability. The Summit serves as a global platform to accelerate implementation of the new strategy, foster partnerships, and translate pledges and commitments into concrete action.



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Parallel session 2.C

The science of well-being – evidence from Traditional Medicine

Plenary 2 and associated parallel sessions will focus on how advancing research, innovation and investment in Traditional Medicine can bring balance for both people and planet, as aligned with the Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034 and global declarations.

This parallel session explores how Traditional Medicine contributes to well-being across the life course, with evidence on mental health, pain management, cancer care, self-care, antibiotic resistance and personalized strategies for healthy lifespans. It examines mechanisms linking Traditional Medicine practices and Indigenous wisdom with biomedical frontiers. The session aims to showcase practical applications, promote informed and safe health choices, and identify policy pathways for scaling access and ensuring equity. Ultimately, it positions the science of well-being as a bridge between ancient knowledge and innovation, demonstrating how Traditional Medicine can strengthen individuals, communities and health systems globally. Expected outputs include actionable recommendations for research priorities, policy pathways and collaborative mechanisms that position Traditional Medicine as a credible and equitable contributor to global well-being and health system resilience.

Rationale

This session is designed to advance the science of well-being as both a unifying concept and a practical pathway to improve quality of life, reduce inequities and build resilient, sustainable health systems globally. In 2023, the World Health Organization, in *Achieving well-being: A global framework for integrating well-being into public health utilizing a health promotion approach*, defined well-being as a holistic and relational state encompassing physical, mental, social and environmental dimensions (1). Building on this framework, the session explores how evidence from Traditional Medicine can enrich and operationalize the science and practice of well-being (2). Speakers will discuss the growing body of scientific evidence around the use of Traditional Medicine in treating chronic conditions and managing mental health and well-being (3); consider the intersection of Traditional Medicine with global strategies to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR) (4); and highlight approaches and personalized strategies for extending healthy lifespans (5,6). By integrating principles from Traditional Medicine with public health and sustainability paradigms, the session reflects WHO’s vision of harmonizing traditional and scientific knowledge (7). In line with the priorities of the Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034, the session emphasizes the importance of strengthening the evidence base through rigorous science, translational research and real-world evidence (8,9). It also supports WHO’s broader aim to foster innovation, ensure equity and promote partnerships that contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (8). In doing so, the session responds directly to the commitments of multilateral partners and the Gujarat and Beijing Declarations, which call for translating evidence and innovation into policy, strengthening benefit-sharing, and advancing global collaboration in health and well-being (10,11).

Objectives

- **Showcase evidence and lessons learned** from Traditional Medicine interventions across mental health, pain management, paediatric cancer care, self-care and the fight against AMR, highlighting both clinical and translational insights.

- **Discuss policy implications and pathways** for scaling safe and effective Traditional Medicine interventions within health systems, with attention to regulation, equity of access and informed health choices.
- **Identify opportunities for collaboration** between researchers, practitioners, policymakers and Indigenous knowledge holders to strengthen the global Traditional Medicine research ecosystem.
- **Promote equity and inclusiveness** by emphasizing culturally resonant practices, recognition and protection of Indigenous knowledge, and strategies for ensuring fair benefit-sharing and accessible Traditional Medicine services.

Guiding questions

1. What is the current state of scientific evidence supporting Traditional Medicine interventions for mental health?
2. How do Traditional Medicine interventions contribute to pain management, integrative oncology, cancer survivorship and recovery?
3. How are advances in cell biology and omics opening pathways to understand Traditional Medicine knowledge and positively influence longevity and well-being?
4. In what ways can Traditional Medicine knowledge and interventions inspire new approaches, technologies and personalized strategies for extending healthy lifespan?
5. How can research outputs be presented to strengthen trust, accessibility and equity in health systems globally?
6. How can the science of Traditional Medicine be leveraged to build healthier, more resilient societies, bridging cultural knowledge with contemporary health priorities?
7. Is there evidence for using Traditional Medicine in the fight against AMR?

Session format

The proposed session format begins with a keynote presentation on how traditional and contemporary approaches to mental health can complement each other to improve access, cultural relevance and outcomes. This will be followed by a series of short presentations by researchers on how Traditional Medicine contributes to well-being across the life course, with evidence on mental health, pain management, cancer care, self-care, AMR and Ayurgenomics. Following the presentations, a moderated Q&A and interactive discussion will invite the audience to share reflections, pose questions and link evidence to their own contexts. Panel members will be asked to conclude with one or two actionable recommendations for research priorities, policy pathways and collaborative mechanisms that position Traditional Medicine as a credible and equitable contributor to global well-being and health system resilience.

References

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