TRIBUTE

Tribute to Hugh MacPherson, PhD*

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On Behalf of the Board of the Society for Acupuncture Research

THIS IS A living tribute to Hugh MacPherson, a remarkable colleague, friend, acupuncture researcher, and indefatigable advocate for acupuncture and integrative medicine, who is fighting the good fight with pancreatic cancer. We wish to honor the wisdom and presence he brought and the research legacy he wrought.

Among his honors, Hugh is the United Kingdom's first professor of acupuncture research, based at the department of health sciences, University of York. Notably, he is also the cofounder of the Northern College of Acupuncture (NCA), York, UK where, until recently, he served as chair of trustees, as well as the founder and clinic director of the York Clinic for Integrated Healthcare. "Hugh's" college, the NCA, has compiled a tribute book from his colleagues near and far (<https://hughmacpherson.nca.ac.uk>) and the Society for Acupuncture Research has created a video tribute (www.acupunctureresearch.org/MacPherson-tribute). We wish to add this living tribute so that readers of JACM, representing the broad spectrum of complementary and alternative medicine research, practice, and policy, who may not know Hugh can meet him through these brief paragraphs.

We speak to you, Hugh, on behalf of the many standing with us, including your fellow board members of the Society

for Acupuncture Research, your numerous world-wide collaborators, and the many young investigators you have inspired; all who describe you as Researcher Extraordinaire. We are hard-pressed to think of anyone in the field of acupuncture research who has contributed a more diverse set of trail-blazing studies. Since today's credo is to support such claims with evidence, please allow us to recap at least a few highlights of your accomplishments.

- You were ahead of your time when, in 2000, you issued a clarion call for research on acupuncture to reflect its real-world practice and not be constricted to fit existing biomedical research models.¹ Imbedded in this article was your wisdom that pragmatic trials comparing acupuncture with usual or standard care could produce far more useful clinical information, including relative side effect profiles and cost-effectiveness, than could trials using sham acupuncture controls.
- You performed and published innovative clinical trials of acupuncture for low-back pain, depression, and irritable bowel syndrome, as well as surveys documenting acupuncture's safety, cost-effectiveness, and community use, which have influenced policy decisions regarding acupuncture reimbursement (<https://www.hughmacpherson.com>).
- You played a major role in the Acupuncture Trialists' Collaboration, a massive effort that pooled individual patient data ($n = \sim 18,000$) from 29 large-scale randomized controlled trials of acupuncture for four types of chronic pain, demonstrating that verum acupuncture outperformed sham acupuncture in a statistically significant manner.^{2,3}
- Yet another jewel in your crown is the landmark set of "STandards for Reporting Interventions in Clinical

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*With his family by his side, Hugh passed away on August 20, 2020.

Trials of Acupuncture (STRICTA)’’ that you named and lead authored, which has led to major improvements in the quality of publications of acupuncture research worldwide.^{4,5}

- Your landmark book, *Acupuncture Research: Strategies for Establishing an Evidence Base*, inspired an entire generation of acupuncture researchers and continues to be used as a resource by many.⁶

Perhaps most inspiring for those of us who have had the privilege of working closely with you are your warm collegiality, generosity, sincere curiosity, and deep humanity. So, here’s to you, Hugh, a heartfelt thank you for your eminent multifaceted career in service of expanding acceptance of acupuncture as a contemporary healthcare option in the West.

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