

# RURAL DOCTOR TCM TRAINING PROGRAM

Spring 2024 factsheet



## 1. Situation Analysis

China is a major agricultural center with large and numerous rural areas, and with populations spread across vast geographic boundaries. When looking at these rural areas, prominent differences appear when comparing demand for medical services with the available supply of rural medical care.

A significant gap exists with the quantity and quality of available health care when comparing urban and rural areas. The demand for high-quality traditional Chinese medical resources among rural residents is urgent. However, rural doctors are burdened with heavy daily tasks in rural medical services and their own household agricultural activities. Lack of time and opportunities to systematically learn and improve upon the level of diagnosis and treatment has hampered the development of excellent TCM doctors.

Faced with this reality, the Give2Asia Rural Doctor Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Training program aims to empower rural doctors by providing practical and systemic education in TCM without having to leave work and home. By allowing rural doctors to learn from the experience of renowned professors and doctors and solidly improve clinical efficacy, they can quickly become excellent TCM doctors to better serve people in rural areas.

## 2. Mission & Goal

Give2Asia's TCM Training program, which implements a charity-supported TCM talent training model, provides participants with one year of learning from renowned TCM practitioners while rural doctors are not off-duty. The purpose is to help rural doctors improve clinical efficacy, gradually improve local TCM prevention and treatment capabilities, prevent disadvantaged groups from falling into poverty or returning to poverty due to illness, protect and pass along TCM culture, and assist in rural revitalization in program areas.

### 3. A New Model for Cultivating TCM Talent

Beijing Traditional Chinese Medicine University Professor Xiao Xiangru is bringing to this program his nearly 40 years of experience in TCM teaching and clinical practice together with his teaching team. Thanks to this expertise, the Give2Asia TCM Training program delivers a system for online learning and live Q&A facilitated by renowned teachers. The program also delivers onsite tutoring and training with teaching assistants accompanying the program.

The program has helped 1,166 rural doctors to learn TCM and improve their clinical practice, while at the same time raising awareness for the need of TCM talent, creating a clear path for rural doctors to gain TCM skills, achieving verifiable efficacy, and developing a project team that can continue this skill building for doctors in future years.

- **Online TCM Learning:** The teaching management team and renowned TCM practitioners offer comprehensive TCM courses for clinical practice. The course has a detailed plan with trainings separated into monthly, weekly, and daily segments. Online teaching is achieving good learning outcomes thanks to supported connectivity and technology.
- **Live Q&A:** The teaching team collects and organizes questions during the learning process to provide targeted answers to questions. The team shares questions and answers with participants through live streaming.
- **Onsite Tutoring and Training:** The program arranges one to two offline thematic activities at the training location each academic year, during which renowned TCM teachers meet with students to have face-to-face exchanges and in-depth discussions about share learning experiences and insights.
- **Teaching Assistant Accompanying Management:** Learning medicine can be long and lonely work in rural communities, which makes the effort easy to give up. The Give2Asia TCM Training program adopts an approach of accompanying teaching and learning. To help keep rural doctors engaged, the program systematically arranges relationships for the doctors with others in roles such as Teaching Managing Director, Class Heads, Class Monitors, and Team Leaders. A dedicated person accompanies, encourages, reminds, and supervises each rural doctor who participates in the training through the year of learning. In this atmosphere, the enthusiasm of students for self-improvement is high: 98.6% of rural doctors completed one year of training, including 112 hours of efficient learning without leaving work.

## 4. Target Beneficiaries

- **Rural doctors participating in training:** Rural doctors are the most direct beneficiaries of this program. As of January 2024, a total of 1,166 rural doctors have been trained located in Lvliang City, Shanxi Province, Datian County, Fujian Province, Qianjiang District, Chongqing City, and Sanming City, Fujian Province. Through a year of targeted learning, they have better mastered the theoretical knowledge of TCM. They can apply it to clinical practice to accurately diagnose their patients and formulate treatment plans. They have also developed good habits of self-learning, which has enhanced their confidence in continuous learning and improvement to provide high-quality medical services for rural patients.
- **Patient population:** The program directly improves local TCM practitioners' diagnosis and treatment levels, making it convenient for the patient population to gain local access better, higher quality, and more efficient TCM services. TCM is simple, inexpensive, effective, and convenient; and ensures that rural people do not have to bear excessive economic burdens while suffering from illness. TCM treatment helps prevent patients and families from falling into poverty or returning to poverty due to illness.
- **College student volunteers:** The volunteer team, mainly composed of college students majoring in TCM, has provided an efficient, humanistic, and sustainable medical learning service plan for this program. As the program progresses under the dual task of learning and management, the college student volunteer team actively learns the knowledge and skills of TCM taught by famous teachers. It plays a leading and demonstrative role in training rural doctors. At the same time, the college student volunteers gain experience managing, accompanying, and supervising the learning and growth of participating rural doctors. This program helps volunteers become more responsible and disciplined young people. It also provides necessary allowances for college student volunteers and other learning rewards, reducing their financial burden, and further stimulating their enthusiasm for the TCM Training program.
- **Primary healthcare institutions:** For hospitals in rural areas, the project aims to improve the diagnosis and treatment level of TCM practitioners, enabling hospitals to provide patients with more professional and efficient services. Improving the strength of TCM in hospitals through training will not only enhance patient satisfaction in these hospitals but also enhance each hospital's overall competitiveness. For example, after Datian County General Hospital's TCM doctors received a year of training, the number of patients seeking TCM in outpatient clinics doubled.

## 5. Outcomes

The TCM Training program has been underway for nearly four years. During that time, 1,187 students from four locations received one year of training in TCM. Among them, 1,166 students passed the exam and were allowed to graduate.

Over 180 teachers, online education administrators, and college student volunteers participated during this period, helping 1,166 trainees complete 112 hours of systematic learning of TCM classes and submitting over 139,000 daily assignments and case files.

- **Lvliang City, Shanxi Province:**

- 461 rural doctors enrolled in training, and 454 rural doctors successfully graduated.
- The average score of the baseline test before classes began was 29 points; The average score on the final exam increased to 67 points.

- **Datian County, Fujian Province:**

- 100 rural doctors enrolled in training, and 99 rural doctors successfully graduated.
- The average score of the baseline test before classes began was 28.8 points; The average score on the final exam increased to 83.6 points.

- **Qianjiang District, Chongqing City:**

- 105 rural doctors enrolled in training, and 104 rural doctors successfully graduated.
- The average score of the baseline test before classes began was 29.6 points; The average score on the final exam has increased to 76 points.

- **Sanming City, Fujian Province:**

- 520 rural doctors enrolled in training, and 509 rural doctors successfully graduated.
- The average score of the baseline test before classes began was 34 points; The average score on the final exam increased to 77 points.

## 6. Program Executors

**Give2Asia:** Provides overall planning, strategic guidance, and financial support for projects. We conduct preliminary research in rural areas, communicate and mobilize internal and external resources, and develop project progress plans. We have provided various support to ensure the smooth development and implementation of this program, and regularly conduct audits and risk control reviews.

**China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development:** CFFPD plays a significant role in critical coordination and communication. They contact and communicate with local government departments, medical institutions, etc., providing strong support for the smooth implementation of the project.

**The Teaching and TCM Expert Team:** This team is fully responsible for designing the class content and implementing the teaching/learning process through online systems, live Q&A sessions, onsite tutoring and training, and through teaching assistants who accompany learning activities.

**The Government's Functional Departments:** The relevant government departments overseeing each geographic area of the program has provided policy support and created favorable guarantees for the program's smooth implementation. They also organize local hospitals and doctor groups to participate in the program and actively promote it.

## 7. The Teaching Content

To effectively help improve the clinical efficacy of TCM in rural areas, Professor Xiao developed a specialized program for this project, leveraging his 40 years of clinical practice and teaching experience with the actual needs of rural area clinical practice.

### **Module 1: Explanation of TCM prevention and treatment of exogenous diseases:**

Exogenous diseases are the most common outpatient diseases encountered by frontline clinical doctors in rural areas, and the TCM has a significant advantage in treating such diseases. However, early diagnosis and treatment of exogenous diseases present problems such as unclear differentiation of symptoms and inaccurate medications, leading to low treatment efficiency in the early stages of these diseases.

The program teaches "TCM Prevention and Treatment of Exogenous Diseases" by focusing on reconstructing and analyzing the essential concepts of exogenous diseases, clarifying the reasons for the mistreatment of exogenous diseases, helping rural doctors significantly reduce the impact of exogenous diseases, and using TCM to accurately improve the clinical efficacy of treating exogenous diseases.

**Module 2: Intensive teaching of clinical medical record course:** TCM medical cases serve as clinical practice record and kidney diseases, analysis of the etiology and pathogenesis, formulation of medication, and decoction methods. This case training provides sufficient explanations to participating doctors in order to help as they go into their communities and apply TCM to their practice.

**Module 3: Study of "Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders":** The "Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders" by Zhang Zhong-jing is the most critical scripture in the clinical treatment of TCM, which is crucial for applying TCM practice. Without understanding the "Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders", becoming an excellent TCM doctor is impossible. Professor Xiao insists on rural doctors studying and understanding the "Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders" fully, helping rural doctors to improve clinical decoction and achieve positive therapeutic effects.

**Module 4: Course explanation of respiratory system diseases:** TCM has significant advantages in treating respiratory system diseases, with simple methods that quickly reduced fever with no side effects. Doctor Xiao has over 30 years of experience treating respiratory diseases through his long-term practice in the TCM clinic. In the winter of December 2017, he cured 600 influenza patients, with most patients achieving a three-day fever reduction and five-day recovery. In the Respiratory Disease Course, Doctor Xiao offers his clinical experience in treating respiratory diseases for over 30 years, based on actual clinical symptoms, helping students improve the treatment effectiveness of respiratory diseases.

**Module 5: Lecture on "Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders":** Professor Xiao's specialized lecture on "Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders" offers an in-depth discussion of his own research and practical achievements as well as discussing the "Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders"'s clinical approach, elements, and effectiveness. He also helps participating doctors understand how TCM practices can be standardized.

## 8. Offline Activities of the Program

During the implementation of the program, offline activities include:

- **Preliminary visit and research:** The program team will delve into the intended an intended program location and collaborate with local healthcare professionals. Medical institutions and doctors engage in extensive, in-depth communication through on-site inspections and interviews. The team accurately grasps the current situation of TCM practice in the area and understands the expectations that the health department has for the program.
- **Mid-term offline academic exchange:** After approximately six months of online learning, the program organizes offline themed activities on a scheduled basis, and the program team invites TCM experts and participating rural doctors to have face-to-face exchanges, deeply exploring the problems encountered in learning and sharing learning experiences and insights.
- **Graduation ceremony:** The program's closing ceremony commends outstanding participating rural doctors, issues graduation certificates, recognizes what has been learned through the program, and brings specialized lectures from renowned TCM teachers to speak as part of the ceremony.

## 9. What We Learn

The TCM Training program has been continuously developing and optimizing its work over the past four years. We have trained 1,166 rural doctors. Currently, in Yunnan Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture and Zhangzhou, Fujian 776 rural doctors are undergoing training. The completed and ongoing trainings have provided us with rich practical experience for continuing the program into the future. For example:

- Using the internet to conduct trainings in rural communities can achieve remarkable results. Rural doctors combine clinical practice with learning to improve therapeutic effects. By systematically studying the classic theories of TCM, one can master the methods of diagnosis and treatment of diseases.
- The project implementation at each location should be around 450 people, which can better achieve economies of scale.
- After several years of process optimization and team building, we can simultaneously carry out projects in 6-7 regions (each including 450 trainees).