

EDITORIAL

"The longstanding successful use of herbal drug combinations in traditional medicine makes it necessary to find a rationale for the pharmacological and therapeutic superiority of many of them in comparison to isolated single constituents."

This statement prefaces the paper by the European researchers, Hildeberte Wagner and Ulrich-Merzenich entitled Synergy Research. Approaching a New generation of Phytopharmaceuticals.*

Both in research attention, as well as in the actual therapeutic use, herbal medicines are now enjoying a world-wide resurgence. For example the annual global sales of herbal products as medicines exceed the hundred billion mark in terms of their US dollar value. In Sri Lanka where the herbal products are seeing a renewal in terms of scientific attention to process technology as well as packaging into more accessible forms, the benefit of the availability of personnel with experience in their clinical use as well as possessing documents and knowledge in their use in medicine, add an attractive lure for potential researchers in this field.

In a recent editorial **, on the very subject Professor Colvin Goonaratna, onetime Chairman of the State Pharmaceutical Corporation of Sri Lanka states: "Physicians clinically experienced in the prescription of herbal medicines are available for consultation by people who are willing to seek their advice. Many of them have vast collections of hitherto chronicled ola manuscripts describing herbs, herbal products and their clinical indications." Adds Professor Goonaratna, "The consumption of herbal medicines and other herbal products is expanding in exponential fashion. This has major implications for public health policy, clinical care of peoples' life and health, health politics and macroeconomics, and the roles of regulatory bodies such as review committees

for research ethics, Medical Councils, and medical science journals. Hence clinical research with traditional medicines, unrestricted by inflexible hierarchical distinctions affords vast opportunities. Medical journals and researchers looking for research material ought to welcome it."

Indeed from the standpoint of modern health management, globally, and even within a little island such as Sri Lanka, recourse to herbal products justifies itself from every standpoint ranging from the socio-economic to the medical. A vast drive towards trans sectorial research in the field must precede this and the resources spent will bring boundless rewards.

References:

- * Phytomedicine. 16 (2009) 97-110
- ** Ceylon Medical Journal (2013), 58, 1=5

*If you wish to receive a copy of
the Link Digest, Please e-mail
your request to
info@linknaturalproducts.com*