

## Getting to the Root of It: Why Holistic Modality Clinics are on the Rise

August 11, 2021

Holistic medicine focuses on the underlying causes of a patient's symptoms or illness, including factors such as diet, lifestyle, environment, and exercise. In holistic medicine, the body is able to heal itself and restore itself by mobilizing its own inherent capabilities.

Holistic clinics offer treatments tailored to the needs of their patients while integrating the patient's goals into each treatment. These treatments could require the skills of a single health provider or the integrated approach of a clinical team.

A holistic practitioner can use a variety of treatment techniques to help their patients achieve optimal health and take responsibility for their well-being. These may include:

- Education on lifestyle changes and self-care to promote wellness. A diet program, exercise program, psychotherapy, relationship and spiritual counselling may be included in this process
- Therapy alternatives such as acupuncture, chiropractic care, homeopathy, massage therapy, and naturopathy
- Western medications and surgical procedures.

In Canada, holistic modalities are gaining in popularity. Today there are more than 2,400 naturopathic doctors practicing in the country. As of 2017, nearly 8 in 10 Canadians had used alternative medicine – such as chiropractic care, massage therapy, yoga and acupuncture – as part of their overall healthcare. (1)

Holistic modality clinics are a growing market that demands specialized coverage. We have compiled a list of the top market trends for brokers interested in serving this exciting market.

## **1) Treating Ongoing COVID Symptoms**

There may be a chronic form of COVID-19 that, like Lyme and other infectious diseases, affects some people for reasons that elude scientific explanations. Referred to as “long haulers”, these COVID survivors experience fatigue, shortness of breath, papules, and limb weakness after the acute stage of the infection ends. (2)

Many of these patients are turning to holistic modalities to manage and reduce their symptoms. Acupuncture, for example, provides COVID long haulers immediate relief from most symptoms.

While scientific evidence might be lacking, acupuncture treatments, Chinese medicine, and other holistic modalities are racking up anecdotal evidence from COVID patients.

## **2) Boosting Immunity, Lowering Stress**

For many patients, the pandemic was a catalyst to shifting their mindset about health and wellbeing. COVID-19 has taught us that our overall immunity needs to be improved. There is no drug for that.

The skepticism about holistic health is not new, but the benefits of boosting immunity and reducing stress are getting through to former naysayers. As a result, local holistic health centres are experiencing a boom in business.

## **3) Disease Prevention Over Drug Prescription**

Many experts attribute Millennials, now the largest living generation, to the rise of holistic modality clinics. (3) Millennials are no longer reserving conventional care as their first stop on their health journey. They remember the countless doctor visits and antibiotics of their youth. They just want to get to the bottom of the problem.

Disenfranchised with the rising costs and time constraints of the traditional healthcare system, Millennials are trading in prescription drugs for alternatives they deem healthier for their wallets and health. In fact, many people are turning to complementary and integrative health, rather than choosing conventional health care first.

Rather than waiting until they get sick to seek treatment, this generation of patients is investing in prevention.

## 4) Health Information in the Palm of Our Hands

Smartphones provide instant access to health and wellness information. Therefore, doctors are no longer the gatekeepers of knowledge about disease prevention. As digital natives, Millennials are impatient with the inefficiencies of communicating with healthcare providers and are accustomed to getting the information they want information now, not later. According to experts, Millennials prefer to Google an ailment or symptom before they visit a doctor because they have grown to expect instant access to information. (3)

With instant access to information about their own health, patients are empowered to make informed choices about preventative treatments, rather than have to rely on the doctor as the sole authority.

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Sources:

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