

## **Acupuncture and Alternative Medicine in Rehabilitation**

Acupuncture has improved the Rehabilitation of New Zealand

The 2013 census showed that close to 40% of Auckland's population was born overseas, making the city one of the world's most culturally diverse. There are now 180,000 Chinese in New Zealand and 120,000 of these live in Auckland. Of the 30,000 Koreans in New Zealand, 22,000 live in Auckland.

The membership of the Acupuncturists NZ follows the general population trend, with increasing numbers of members arriving from China and Korea. The majority choose to settle in Auckland. The average Kiwi's increased exposure to particularly the Chinese culture is also having a tangible effect in our acupuncture clinics. No longer is acupuncture and herbal medicine being seen as weird or to be frightened of, more and more New Zealanders are beginning to seek out our practitioners.

A study completed showed that New Zealanders are increasingly choosing treatment other than orthodox western medicine. Disillusioned with the choices provided by the general practitioners, they are looking for valid alternatives. Acupuncture and herbal medicine are providing what they are looking for.

We continue to work with the Accident Compensation Corporation as more Kiwis look to include acupuncture in their treatment programme after an injury. More practitioners providing more treatment means that the overall cost has also been increasing – not something that the government really likes to see. Our profession has also been targeted by the Skeptics, largely because of the published ACC figures. AcNZ has very actively been counteracting their arguments with robust research – it appears to be having an effect.