

Email:
tcaaadm@gmail.com

Re: Natural Therapies Review 2024: Tai Chi Evidence Evaluation

Dear Tai Chi Community and Supporters,

The Tai Chi Association of Australia Inc. (TCAA) is a not-for profit incorporated Association representing the interests of Tai Chi in Australia with representatives in all States and Territories. Established in June 1999, one of its main objectives is to promote greater participation and recognition of Tai Chi as a preventative and therapeutic exercise for maintaining and improving the health and well-being of all Australians.

The TCAA is pleased to advise on the outcome of the long-awaited Natural Therapies Review 2019-2020 (Review) by the Federal Minister for Health and Aged Care (Federal Minister).

In April 2025, this Review determined that Tai Chi (amongst other named natural therapies), has enough evidence of effectiveness on selected medical conditions to be considered for re-eligible for private health insurance rebates. On 14 April 2025, in accepting the recommendations of the Review, the Federal Minister issued a media release advising that Australians will be able to access rebates for Tai Chi, following an independent review of its effectiveness in health outcomes.

In the 184 pages report, it is noteworthy that TCAA is acknowledged as the main industry body in Australia supporting Tai Chi practitioners in their professional practice and in relation to accredited member instructors, the provision of codes of conduct, codes of ethics and provision of continuing education.

One positive outcome from the Review is likely to result in significant benefits to the wider Tai Chi community in Australia. Whilst we understand that the coverage of natural therapies remains a decision for insurers, we urge members to follow up with their private health funds to ensure that the outcome of the Review is acted upon; and that the benefits are being passed onto consumers in the timely re-inclusion of private health insurance rebates.

The Evidence Evaluation Report stated moderate certainty that Tai Chi probably:

- Reduces pain and stiffness in people with osteoarthritis. It also stated that The Australian Guidelines strongly recommend regular land-based exercise such as muscle strengthening exercises, Pilates, walking and Tai Chi; and
- Reduces fear of falling in adults at high risk of falling. It further stated that The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) recommend Tai Chi as the “*only single exercise intervention that is proven to reduce the risk of falling*” providing a means of reducing the burden of falls and fractures in Australia.

For further details about the Review report and more specifically about the Evidence Evaluation Report on the clinical effectiveness of Tai Chi: TAI CHI FOR PREVENTING AND TREATING HEALTH CONDITIONS, see the links below:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/natural-therapies-review-2024-reports-and-evaluations?language=en>

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/natural-therapies-review-2024-tai-chi-evidence-evaluation?language=en>