

## Letter to the Editor

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# On the Significance of Interdisciplinary Studies of Hikmah and Medicine

## Hamed Arezaei

Institute for Studies in Medical History, Persian and Complementary Medicine, Iran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran, Department of Traditional Medicine, School of Persian Medicine, Iran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran.

*Correspondence to: Arezaei H*

*Address: Institute for Studies in Medical History, Persian and Complementary Medicine, Iran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran Department of Traditional Medicine, School of Persian Medicine, Iran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran.*

*Email address: arezaei.a@iums.ac.ir*

## Dear Editor

Here, I aim to share a few points on the relationship between hikmah and medicine. Hikmah (literally “wisdom”) is defined as obtaining truth (haqiqa) with the help of intellect (‘aql) and knowledge (‘ilm) (1). The great Muslim philosophers used the term as an equivalent to “philosophy”, describing hikmah as “the perfecting of the human soul through the conceptualization of things and the judgment of theoretical and practical truths to the measure of human capability (2)”.

Contemporary philosophy of medicine specifies different levels for medical sciences: first, the fundamentals of medicine or what is taught under basic medical sciences at universities; second, clinical medicine. The latter can be concerned with clinical research that pursues medical developments and advances and also refers to the practice of medicine to treat or cure illnesses. Accordingly, three distinct levels can be distinguished: theoretical medicine (fundamentals of medicine), clinical research, and the practice of medicine (3). Each of these levels can be associated with certain philosophical theoretical contemplations and practical applications. As regards the fundamentals of medicine, many philosophical discussions are involved in the nature of these basic sciences. In other words, the basics of medicine noticeably overlap with etiological, teleological, ontological, theological, anthropological, and cosmological topics. Therefore, referring to and making use of these philosophical reflections in different epistemic fields can be helpful in studying the fundamentals of medicine. Formerly, statistical and epidemiological researchers sought to turn a certain methodology into something universally true, casting aside not only philosophy and hikmah but any other sciences (even basic sciences) from clinical research. However, recent studies have shown that this approach has not been successful. Put differently, there are numerous topics in epistemology, logic, and philosophy of science that cannot be neglected in medical research methodology. Given that the practice of medicine is directly related to human health, it is also closely tied to philosophical and hikmah-related discussions. Subjects like doctor-patient relationships, clinical decision-making, particularly in special circumstances, and teaching clinical medicine involve various topics in medical ethics and law, which ultimately lead to theoretical reflections in moral and legal philosophy. This field can be considered not just a part of medical sciences but a mechanism that determines and governs policies and actions connected with human health in a given society. Put simply, it is the system and organization via which medical institutions intervene in health-related affairs and provide medical and healthcare services. This is where “health humanities” comes in with the task of properly addressing the raised discussions and offering

solutions to resolve pertinent predicaments. An example is the nature and significance of justice, which should be observed in providing services to all population groups. It involves the theory of justice (much discussed in political philosophy) and the philosophy of law, economics, and management. Overall, the philosophy of humanities has a major role in issues related to medical services .

The briefly reviewed points are just a section of so many topics that require scrupulous examination in hikmah, philosophy, and medicine. Over the past centuries, philosophical, theological, mystical, ethical, and empirical thinkers have striven to get closer to answers to these questions. Thus, dedicating scholarly attention to these topics can yield well-founded solutions for researchers, physicians, and healthcare managers to form an in-depth understanding of medical sciences, optimize research methods, increase the success of clinical treatments, and provide better and fair medical services.

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