



# Traditional Medicine's Role in Contemporary Benin Healthcare Systems: A Comparative Perspective

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## Abstract

Benin's healthcare system is grappling with challenges such as a shortage of medical professionals and an increasing prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Traditional medicine, which has been part of Benin's cultural heritage for centuries, may offer complementary solutions. A comparative analysis was conducted using secondary data from national surveys, academic journals, government reports, and interviews with healthcare practitioners and traditional healers. Data were analysed using thematic content analysis to identify themes related to traditional medicine's role and integration. Traditional medicine in Benin is practiced by approximately 70% of the population and plays a significant role in treating NCDs such as hypertension, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. Its effectiveness is often underestimated due to lack of standardised practice guidelines, leading to underutilization within modern healthcare systems. Traditional medicine can complement modern healthcare services but requires formal recognition, standardization, and integration into national health policies for effective utilization. Benin's Ministry of Health should develop a comprehensive policy framework that recognizes traditional medicine and integrates it with modern healthcare practices. Collaboration between traditional healers and modern medical professionals is essential to enhance service delivery and patient outcomes. Traditional Medicine, Benin Healthcare Systems, Comparative Study, NCDs

**Keywords:** *African geography, Traditional medicine, Anthropology, Public health, Medical anthropology, Healthcare delivery, Cultural studies*

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