

10 years on from the Lannoye/Collins report reference to CAM is included in EU health policy – twice!



In 1997 the European Parliament adopted a weakened resolution on Complementary and Alternative Medicine non-conventional medicine (A4-0075/97). Of the seven recommendations made in it only one has so far been fully realised – the creation of a directive on food supplements. However, in what can only be described as a breakthrough, the newly adopted EU FP7 Research Framework and EU Health programs both include reference to CAM. The EU Health Program (2008-2013) states that:

The programme should recognise the importance of a holistic approach to public health and take into account, where appropriate and where there is scientific or clinical evidence about its efficacy, complementary and alternative medicine in its actions.

The new EU 7th Framework Program for Research under a section titled ‘Optimising the delivery of health care to European citizens’ states:

Translating clinical outcome into clinical practice: to create the knowledge basis for clinical decision-making and to address the translation of outcomes of clinical research into clinical practice, especially addressing patient safety and the better use of medicines (including some aspects of pharmacovigilance and scientifically tested complementary and alternative medicines) as well as the specificities of children, women and the elderly population.

Both programs presuppose the existence of research evidence for CAM’s clinical effectiveness and neither program offers the possibility of undertaking new research. Nonetheless this is progress for CAM and sees its widespread and growing use in the EU formally recognised in EU policy and strategy documents.

ECCH representatives participate in WHO working group on homeopathic medicines



As part of its growing interest and responsibility in the area of Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicine (TCAM) the World Health Organisation (WHO) has recently been developing a guidance document on the quality of homeopathic medicines. After consulting with ECCH and a number of other stakeholders on first and second drafts of a document, WHO recently convened a three-day workshop in Milan, Italy to perfect the final draft. The event was co-hosted by the WHO, the University of Milan and the Regional Government of Lombardy. Participants were welcomed by Dr Xiaorui Zhang, WHO Coordinator for TCAM and the workshop was chaired by Dr Konstantin Keller, Chair of the Herbal Medicines Committee of the EMEA.

ECCH was represented by ECCH Pharmacy Coordinator Carl Classen and General Secretary Stephen Gordon. After three days work a shorter and more efficient document was produced. The final version will hopefully be published by the end of 2007.

ECCH at the BfArM conference – Homeopathic Medical Products in Europe



On 18 June ECCH Pharmacy Coordinator Carl Classen and General Secretary Stephen Gordon attended a conference on the future regulation of homeopathic medicinal products (HMPs) in Europe organised by the German medicines agency, BfArM in Bonn. The Conference was well attended by 100 representatives of HMP manufacturers and interested professional groups.

Officers of the Bfarm and the Dutch and Portuguese medicines agencies gave presentations as did members of the German and European Manufacturers' groupings.

ECCH Pharmacy Coordinator Carl Classen gave a presentation on the concerns of homeopathic practitioners on behalf of a broad coalition of German and European organisations of homeopathic doctors and practitioners. Overall the day was a worthwhile one that will hopefully help focus the minds of the next meeting of the Heads of Agencies (HoA) Homeopathic Medicinal Products Working Group (HMPWG) when it next meets in Lisbon under the Portuguese Presidency of the EU.

Implementation of EU pharmaceutical legislation regarding HMPs is currently taking place in a haphazard and uninformed way in EU member states and seriously threatens citizens' and practitioners' rights of full access to HMPs in several countries.

NATIONAL NEWS

Belgian homeopaths' association recognised in Royal Decree



On 9 May 2007 a Royal Decree was published declaring that the Liga Homeopatica Classica (LHC) was officially recognised as CAM organisation of homeopathy. This is the result of more than seven years of work of the Belgian ECCH member association, the LHC.

The decision comes after last year's recognition of the Belgian Ministry of Health. As a consequence of the recognition all Belgian homeopathic education is regulated and homeopaths' consultation fees are fixed. Homeopaths wanting to practise in Belgium will have to become members of either the LHC, which represents both homeopaths and homeopathic doctors, or the UNIO, which only represents doctors. Both these organisations will be in the same Chamber of homeopathy.

Based on the 1999 law for CAM therapies, the Ministry will establish Chambers for each of the four recognised disciplines; homeopathy, acupuncture, chiropractic and osteopathy. Homeopaths and homeopathic doctors will be members of the same Chamber.

These changes brought to an end to the very restrictive legal situation that existed in Belgium up until a few years ago, where homeopaths and other CAM practitioners were persecuted simply for treating patients. Some were ordered by the court to stop practising and had their patient files removed. The new legal framework positively regulates the four mentioned CAM therapies and contributes to ensuring the safety and freedom of choice in healthcare for Belgian patients.

Reference: Federale overheidsdienst volksgezondheid, veiligheid van de voedselketen en leefmilieu. C-2007/22240. 8 Februari 2007. Koninklijk besluit houdende erkenning van een beroepsorganisatie van beoefenaars van een niet-conventionele praktijk.

CAM recognised by Spanish regional Government



The Government in Catalonia introduced a new law in February 2007 to regulate all CAM therapies. Homeopathy has been included as a sub-category of naturopathy. Practitioners have to pass an exam before they may continue to practise. Three other Spanish regions have expressed interest in introducing similar regulation. Medical doctors meanwhile have started active campaigns to restrict the practice of homeopathy to medical doctors only.

Reference: Decreto 31/2007, de 30 de enero, pr el que se regulan las condiciones para el ejercicio de determinadas terapias naturales. Diari Oficial de la Generalitat de Catalunya. Núm. 4812 – 1.2.2007.

Half of all Norwegians used CAM last year



A recently published survey showed a considerable increase in the use of CAM therapies in Norway. Over 48 % of the population tried some sort of CAM therapy over the past year. This is ten times as many as 10 years ago, says professor Vinjar Fønnebø in an interview with NIFAB. Similar surveys carried out in 1997, 2002 and 2005 showed use of CAM therapies of 11, 9 and 10 percent respectively.

Professor Fønnebø thinks previous surveys may have been insufficient in reporting accurate figures. The large increase in the use of CAM therapies may

partly be explained by researchers in the latest survey listing specific therapies when posing their questions. Another possible explanation may be that the most commonly mentioned therapy, massage, was not specified in previous surveys. As many as 24 percent reported the use of massage compared to only 4.3 percent who had tried homeopathic treatment. Fønnebø points out that surveys carried out 10 years ago also included treatment by chiropractors, which is no longer considered a CAM profession in Norway, but a statutorily recognised profession.

Surprisingly the largest age group was from 15 to 24 years. This is a significant change compared to all previous surveys. Researchers believe this may partly be explained by younger people seeking alternative therapies, not merely to treat disease, but also to improve their feeling of wellbeing. Less surprising was that women more often than men consulted with CAM practitioners.

Reference: Nasjonalt informasjonssenter for alternativ behandling (NIFAB). (2007) Bruk av alternativ behandling i Norge.

http://www.nifab.no/nyheter/nifab/halve_norge_bruker_alte_mativ_behandling

T/CAM main source of healthcare in Ghana



Where the use of CAM is growing across Europe, traditional complementary and alternative medicine is the preferred and the only source of health care for 80 % of citizens in African countries such as Ghana. There is one traditional healer per 200 patients, compared to one medical doctor per 20 000 patients. Medical doctors simply don't have time to take care of the large numbers of patients.

WHO's Africa Regional Director, Dr. Ibrahima Samba, states that even though African TCAM has been stigmatized as backward during colonialism, it continues to thrive in Africa. This fact, together with the serious shortage of health workers, forced Ghana to integrate T/CAM into the public healthcare system.

TCAM is better integrated into the health system in Ghana than in other African countries. The Ministry of Health has a separate directorate for TCAM. Several decrees regulate and ensure the safety of treatments such as homeopathy and osteopathy.

Source: Afrol News <http://www.afrol.com/articles/25359> (23.06.200)

RESEARCH NEWS

90 % better from homeopathy in dentistry

A recently published survey showed 90% of 496 patients improved from homeopathy prescribed in dentistry. Most positive results were seen in inflammatory diseases such as pericoronitis (inflammation around molar/wisdom teeth), reversible pulpitis, periodontal abscess and periodontal infection, as well as sensitive cementum (sensitive teeth) and toothache with decay. Only a limited number of articles on dental homeopathy have been published and these results call for more research to be carried out.

The use of homeopathy in dentistry has grown over the past decades. Although homeopathy cannot replace mechanical treatment in dentistry, it may serve as a useful adjunct to dental treatment and replace orthodox drugs that may have side effects. Since the first candidates passed examination in 1994, interest has grown and the British Homeopathic Dental Association now has 90 members on its register.

References: Mathie RT and Farrer S. (2007) Outcomes from homeopathic prescribing in dental practice: a prospective, research-targeted, pilot study. *Homeopathy* 96, 74-81.

Varley P. (2007) What do homeopathic dentists do? Guest editorial. *Homeopathy* 96, 72-73

British Homeopathic Dental Association www.bhda.co.uk

Homeopathy effective in trigeminal neuralgia

A newly published observational study showed that homeopathy is effective in treating patients suffering from trigeminal neuralgia. Individualised homeopathic remedies were prescribed in 30C potency to 15 patients suffering from trigeminal neuralgia. Results showed statistically significant reduction of pain intensity and frequency of attacks ($P < 0.001$). Over a four month period intensity of pain was reduced by 60 percent.

The most frequently prescribed remedies were *Pulsatilla nigricans* and *Natrium muriaticum*, followed by *Aconitum napellus*, *Sulphur iotum*, *Nux vomica*, *Ignatia amara*, *Calcarea carbonica*, *Phosphorus*, *Magnesia phosphorica* and *Kali bichromicum*. More research has been called for to include larger number of patients and longer follow-up periods.

Reference: Mojaver et al. (2007) Individualized homeopathic treatment of trigeminal neuralgia: an observational study. *Homeopathy* 96, 82-86.

Research News Extra: New study shows homeopathy as effective as conventional treatment for acute ear and respiratory conditions but with faster response times and fewer adverse drug reactions

Reference:

BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine 2007, 7:7
<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6882/7/7>

European Council for Classical Homeopathy

National Association Members of ECCH

ARMENIA

Organisation for Classical Homeopathy
Website: www.homeopathy.am

BELGIUM

Liga Homeopatica Classica
Website: www.ligahomeopatica.be

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Society of Homeopaths of B&H
Web-site: www.homeopatijabh.org

BULGARIA

Homeopathic Society of Bulgaria
Website: www.bghomeopathy.org

CROATIA

Croatian Association of Homeopaths of Classical Homeopathy
Email: sanja.zamic@st.htnet.hr

CZECH REPUBLIC

Czech Association of Classical Homeopathy
Website: www.homeopathy.cz

DENMARK

Dansk Selskab for Klassisk Homøopati
Website: www.homeopati.dk

FINLAND

Suomen Homeopaatit ry
Website: www.homeopaatit.org

GERMANY

Verband Klassischer Homöopathen Deutschlands e.V
Web-site: www.vkhd.de

GREECE

Homeopath's Association of Greece
Website: www.ikko.gr

IRELAND

Irish Society of Homœopath
Website: www.ishom.com

ISRAEL

Israeli Association for Classical Homeopathy
Website: www.homeopathy-israel.co.il

ITALY

Federazione Nazionale Omeopati
Email: afilar@libero.it

NETHERLANDS

Nederlandse Vereniging van Klassiek Homeopaten
Website: www.nvkh.nl

NORWAY

Norske Homeopaters Landsforbund
Website: www.nhl.no

POLAND

Krajowe Towarzystwo Zwolennikow Homeopati
E-mail: homeopatia.roman@wp.pl

PORTUGAL

Associação Portuguesa de Homeopatia
Website: www.homeopatia-aph.pt

SERBIA

Association for Classical Homeopathy "Hahnemann"
Website: www.udruzenjehomeopata.com

SPAIN

Asociación Española de Homeopatas Unicistas
Website: www.aehu.es

SWEDEN

Svenska Akademin för Klassisk Homeopati
Website: www.sakh.org

SWITZERLAND

Homöopathie Verband Schweiz
Website: www.hvs.ch

Verband Klassischer Homöopathen/-Innen

Website: www.vkh.ch

UNITED KINGDOM

Alliance of Registered Homeopaths
Website: www.a-r-h.org

Homeopathic Medical Association

Website: www.the-hma.org

Society of Homeopaths

Website: www.homeopathy-soh.org

Applicants for ECCH membership

MACEDONIA

Association for classical homeopathy DENICA
Email: deltaproekt@mt.net.mk

There are ECCH Contact Persons in

Austria, Estonia, France, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovakia and the UAE.

Officers of the Council for 2007

Chairman
Treasurer

Petter Viksveen (Norway)
Michael Smith (Ireland)

Vice Chair
General Secretary

Zofia Dymitr (UK)
Stephen Gordon (UK)

ECCH Secretariat Contact Details

School House, Market Place, Kenninghall, Norfolk NR16 2AH, United Kingdom
Telephone & Fax: (44) 1953 888163 Email: ecch@homeopathy-ecch.org
Web-site: www.homeopathy-ecch.eu