

## New WHO resolution on Traditional Medicine

In May 2009 the 62nd World Health Assembly of the WHO adopted a resolution that is relevant for homeopathy and other therapies in the field of Complementary and Alternative Medicine.

The resolution notes the progress that many governments have made to include Traditional Medicine, including Complementary and Alternative Medicine, into their national health systems, and that progress in this field has been achieved by a number of Member States through implementation of the WHO traditional medicine strategy 2002–2005.

The resolution refers to the Beijing Declaration on Traditional Medicine of November 2008 and the WHO world health report 2008: "Primary health care - now more than ever". It recognizes traditional medicine as one of the resources of primary health care services that could contribute to improved health outcomes.

The resolution recalls the Declaration of Alma-Ata which states, inter alia, that "The people have the right and duty to participate individually and collectively in the planning and implementation of their health care" and "Primary health care relies, at local and referral levels, on health workers, including physicians, nurses, midwives, auxiliaries and community workers as applicable, as well as traditional practitioners as needed, suitably trained socially and technically to work as a health team and to respond to the expressed health needs of the community".

The resolution urges Member States to consider adopting and implementing the Beijing Declaration on Traditional Medicine, to respect, preserve and widely communicate the knowledge of traditional medicine, treatments and practices, to formulate national policies, regulations and standards as part of comprehensive national health systems, to promote appropriate, safe and effective use of traditional medicine, to consider including traditional medicine into their national health systems, to further develop traditional medicine based on research and innovation, to consider establishing systems for the qualification,



WHO/Cédric Vincensini

accreditation or licensing of traditional medicine practitioners, to consider strengthening communication between conventional and traditional medicine providers and to consider establishing appropriate training programmes with content related to traditional medicine for health professionals, medical students and relevant researchers.

In the resolution the WHO Director-General is requested to provide support to Member States in implementing the Beijing Declaration on Traditional Medicine, to update the WHO Traditional Medicine strategy 2002–2005, based on countries' progress and current new challenges in the field of traditional medicine, to continue providing policy guidance to countries on how to integrate traditional medicine into health systems, especially to promote the use of traditional medicine for primary health care, including disease prevention and health promotion, to continue providing technical guidance to support countries in ensuring the safety, efficacy and quality of traditional medicine.

### References

Resolution WHA62.13 of the 62nd World Health Assembly of the WHO is available from the WHO website in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#) and [other languages](#).

WHO report *Primary health care - now more than ever* is available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish, and Portuguese from the [WHO website](#).

## WHO renewed priority areas for Traditional Medicine



At the 2nd European Congress for Integrative Medicine that took place on 20 and 21 November in Berlin, Dr Xiaorui Zhang, head of the Department for Traditional Medicine at the World Health Organization, presented the renewed priority areas of WHO's Traditional Medicine. In

this context it is essential to know that WHO's definition of Traditional Medicine includes Complementary and Alternative Medicine (such as homeopathy) in countries where the dominant health care system is based on allopathic medicine. WHO urges the member states to capitalize on the potential

contribution of Traditional Medicine to self-care and to people-centred primary care. In addition, to integrate Traditional Medicine into health systems, to strengthen research in this area, and to promote agreement and consensus on criteria for endorsement, integration, and evaluation of Traditional Medicine as a subsystem in national health systems.

In accordance with its new position on Traditional Medicine, WHO is currently re-locating the Traditional Medicine Programme. No longer a separate department, it will be part of the Department of Health System Governance and Service Delivery.

## Meeting of National Presidents

From 13 to 15 November the ECH held several meetings in Budapest which were hosted by the Hungarian Homeopathic Doctors' Association - Magyar Homeopata Orvosi Egyesület. Apart from the usual subcommittee meetings and the Council meeting, a meeting of the Presidents of the ECH affiliated national associations of homeopathic doctors was organised for the first time.

This meeting provided an ideal opportunity for reflection on how the ECH is playing its role in Europe. Although the ECH does its utmost by means of emails, meeting minutes and newsletters to keep the national homeopathic doctors' associations and their members informed about what the work that is carried out by the ECH, the ECH Council was under the impression that homeopathic doctors at the national level needed more information about the work at the European level and the ECH would like to have more input from the national level about what the ECH should do for homeopathy in Europe.

The ECH Council members presented the work the ECH has carried so far, both internally and externally. Internally in the various subcommittees (documentation, education, provings, pharmacy, politics, research and patients/users interests) with the participation of delegates from affiliated associations and teaching centres as well as other professionals whose expert input helps to enhance the scientific and professional basis of homeopathy. Externally, in the political field, in making homeopathy more visible and building alliances with other stakeholders at the European level.



The ECH Council received great acclaim from the presidents for the achievements and plans of the ECH. Its success may entice even more presidents into attending the next meeting.

## Homeopathy a medical act in Spain

On 29 September the Committee on Health and Consumer Affairs of the Spanish Parliament unanimously adopted a bill that recognizes homeopathy as a medical act. It urges the government to "take the measures necessary for the exercise of homeopathy exclusively by graduates in medicine and surgery."

This is the result of a few years of concerted action by the Federación Española de Médicos Homeópatas -FEMH- (Spanish Federation of Homeopathic Physicians), Acadèmia Mèdico Homeopàtica de Barcelona -AMHB- (Homeopathic Medical Academy of Barcelona), and Sociedad Española de Medicina Homeopàtica -SEMH- (Spanish Society of Homeopathic Medicine).

## European Library for Homeopathy is open

The new European Library of Homeopathy was officially opened in early October in the city of Köthen, where Hahnemann lived from 1821 to 1835. The city of Köthen invested approximately € 2.3 million in the renovation of the classicist building, which was erected in 1829. The library now includes approximately 6,000 volumes of homeopathic literature, of



which approximately 2,500 publications belonged to the historical holding of the Homeopathic Library of Hamburg - with special rarities from the years 1796 to 1950. A large number of homeopathic works have been donated by private individuals and associations and societies of the library. Overall, the library has a capacity for about 12,000 publications.

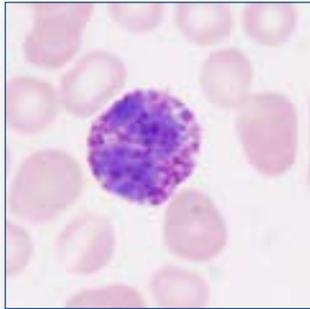
The European Library for Homeopathy is closely connected with the tradition. The homeopathic discipline returns to its place of origin Köthen in the direct vicinity of the former residence of Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy. At the same time the Library is facing the future. Parts of the curriculum of the first German Masters course in homeopathy at the Otto-von-Guericke University of Magdeburg, which will start in winter 2010/2011, will take place right here. The course is aimed at doctors, dentists, veterinarians and pharmacists who want to study a scientifically based method of homeopathy. The course is aimed at both experienced practitioners as well as beginners who are interested in highly qualified training.

## Repetition trial on basophils confirms high-dilution effects

There are several experimental models in basic research on high homeopathic potencies, of which the inhibition of human basophil activation by high dilutions of histamine is one of the most successful ones.

The first study on potentized histamine was published by Sainte-Laudy in 1991. To date, the results have been confirmed by the same working group and by others.

A group of Italian researchers recently published a new study using a strictly standardized flow cytometry protocol and a new dilution/succussion procedure. Serial centesimal (1:100) histamine dilutions and water controls were tested on human basophil responsiveness to anti-IgE antibodies, using flow cy-



tometry. Each dilution step was followed by vertical mechanical succussion at 20 strokes/s. Basophil-enriched buffy coats from healthy blood donors were incubated with  $10^{-4}$  mol/l histamine (2C) and with serially diluted preparations from 10-20

mol/l (10C) to  $10^{-32}$  mol/l (16C), then incubated for 30 min with 1 Ig/ml goat monoclonal anti-human IgE and basophils stained for immunophenotyping.

Membrane up-regulation of CD203c, which in these experimental conditions proved to be a more consistent activation marker than CD63, was significantly inhibited in samples treated with histamine at the dilutions of 2C ( $P = 0.001$ ), 12C ( $P = 0.047$ ), 14C ( $P = 0.003$ ), 15C ( $P = 0.036$ ) and 16C ( $P = 0.009$ ). Control water dilutions/succussions did not show any significant effect.

This study has again demonstrated that both low and high dilutions of histamine inhibit CD203c up-regulation in anti-IgE stimulated basophils. Repetition trials of published studies on high dilutions (beyond Avogadro's number) are essential for the scientific credibility of homeopathy.

### Reference

Chirumbolo S, Brizzi M, Ortolani R, Vella A, Bellavite P (2009). Inhibition of CD203c membrane up-regulation in human basophils by high dilutions of histamine: a controlled replication study. [Inflammation Research, 58:755-764.](#)

## International Society for Complementary Medicine Research

The International Society for Complementary Medicine Research [ISCMR](#) is an international scientific organization of researchers, practitioners and policy makers that:

- facilitates communication and collaboration among researchers and practitioners with an interest in research on a worldwide basis.
- provides access to Complementary Medicine research information (internationally relevant events, conferences, publications, funding)
- provides access to an international database of ISCMR members.
- provides reduced Journal subscription rates and international meeting registration fees.
- collaborates with individual researchers (or teams), regional societies, professional organizations and research networks to further mutual goals related to research and development agendas.
- organizes an annual Complementary Medicine Research meeting.

President: Cheryl Ritenbaugh; President Elect: Claudia Witt

The next International Congress on Complementary Medicine Research will be held 19-21 May 2010 in Tromsø, Norway. The local host of the congress is NAFKAM (National Research Center in Complementary and Alternative Medicine) in conjunction with ISCMR. As before, the congress will be a hotspot presenting and discussing the latest research developments in the field of CAM at that time. The theme of ICCMR 2010 is: **"Relevant research for the chronically ill"**. Researchers from around the world will have a chance to both share research findings and (re)establish important personal connections with others working in the same field.

For more details: [iccmr2010](#).



## Petition to the European Commission

Most readers will remember that the European Parliament in its resolution A4-0075 of 29 May 1997 called on the European Commission to launch a process of recognizing non-conventional medicine (or Complementary and Alternative Medicine).

To date, the European Commission has not taken any action in this direction. As to the legal recognition and regulation of homeopathy and other CAM therapies, the situation is still rather heterogeneous. In some Member States homeopathy has been officially recognized as a therapeutic method by the government, in some other Member States doctors can obtain an additional qualification in homeopathy, recognised by the national medical association. And there are Member States where the practice of homeopathy by either doctors or practitioners is forbidden. That means for example that a doctor in Sweden having received homeopathic training in Germany and the UK is not allowed to practice homeopathy in his own country, and that an Austrian doctor moving to Slovenia will have similar problems. That means that the EU principles of free movement of services and freedom of establishment are still far off in the field of homeopathy. Other CAM therapies are facing the same inequalities.

The situation also hampers the rights of European citizens to freely choose the practitioner or therapy they see fit. This is a violation of the European Union's Charter of Fundamental Rights, in particular article 35.

A group of health professionals from Belgium and France have recently launched a website in seven languages where a peti-



tion can be signed. The initiators hope to receive a million signatures from European citizens. The petition requests that the European Commission take the legislative steps required for the legal recognition of non-conventional (complementary and alternative) medical disciplines.

Please visit the [website](http://www.petitionecommed.eu) and make it known to all your friends and all your patients!

## Provings workshop in November 2010

The ECH Provings Subcommittee is organising a workshop on provings, based on the 'ECH Provings Guidelines'. This is in line with the ECH policy to promote the conduct of high-quality provings across Europe.

The workshop will deal with the spirit and philosophy of homeopathy and at the same time with modern scientific methodology and the requirements of European (and possibly national) competent authorities. The workshop will include subjects such as proving management, training of supervisors and provers, instruction of provers, recording and extracting proving data, compilation and publication of the data, paper work for the medical ethics committee. The relevant texts in the ECH Proving Guidelines and a model protocol will be outlined. Practical exercises will be part of the workshop. Experience with the conduct of provings is not necessary, but certainly useful for this course.

The workshop is intended for homeopathic doctors who consider organising provings as a co-ordinator or initiator, or who

would like to acquire knowledge and training as a prover or as a supervisor. The workshop is also recommended to board members and officials of homeopathic organisations and schools, who consider enhancing the conduct of provings in their organisation, association or school.

As a follow-up to the workshop, the ECH will provide a forum for discussion with experienced proving co-ordinators and committee members who are well acquainted with specific EU regulations.

The workshop will take place on Friday 12 November 2010 in Brussels (Hilton hotel), on the day before the 7th ECH General Assembly. Interested people are recommended to contact the subcommittee coordinator Dr Jean Pierre Jansen, e-mail: [jpjansen@antenna.nl](mailto:jpjansen@antenna.nl). Please mention in your e-mail your professional activities, your motivation for following this course as well as your experience with provings, if any.

Early registration is recommended because the number of participants is limited. Participation is free.

## International Homeopathy Day in Slovenia

Medical doctors in Slovenia who would like to practise homeopathy are confronted with an absurd situation. According to the Law on Healing Practices that came into force in October 2007 only medical graduates are allowed to legally practise homeopathy. But if medical doctors start practising homeopathy, the Slovenian Medical Chamber will suspend their medical licence. The Chamber takes the position that medical doctors with a licence can only practice scientific medicine and that homeopathy is not based on sound scientific evidence. Homeopathic doctors are then no longer allowed to practise conventional medicine.

The Law on Healing Practices includes not only homeopathy, but also many other CAM modalities such as anthroposophic medicine, ayurvedic medicine, traditional Chinese medicine, bioresonance, massage etc. Practitioners can be people who have at least a secondary education in the domain of healthcare and a valid licence acquired in compliance with this law. However, homeopathy (as well as chiropractic and osteopathy) can only be performed by individuals with a diploma from the medical faculty, having taken training in this discipline and having a valid licence acquired in compliance with the law.

So, only medical doctors with a licence can practice conventional medicine. And only medical doctors without a licence can practice homeopathy. For many years the Slovenian Homeopathic Society SHD has been striving for the recognition of homeopathy as a medical method so as to ensure that medical doctors with a licence are allowed to treat their patients also with homeopathy.

In April 2010 the International Homeopathy Day will take place in Ljubljana, Slovenia to make policy makers in Slovenia aware of the worldwide practice of homeopathy by medical doctors and its scientific credibility. Invitations are sent out to members of the Parliament, officials from the Ministry of Health, Academy of Sciences, medical faculties of some Universities, ambassadors of various countries where homeopathy has a strong position, among many others. The programme has been drawn up by the SHD, ECH and LMHI.

The organisation of the International Homeopathy Day is intended to be the start of a tradition of annual events organized by the ECH and LMHI. National homeopathic doctors' associations will by turns host such an International Homeopathy Day, especially in countries where homeopathy needs a helping hand.



## Next LMHI World Homeopathy Congress in USA

The LMHI World Homeopathy Congress of 2010 will explore ways in which homeopathy can play a vital role in the future of medicine. This historic gathering marks the 200th anniversary of Samuel Hahnemann's *Organon of Medicine*, and to commemorate this momentous occasion, all attendees will be receiving a facsimile copy of the original 5th edition of the *Organon* which includes Hahnemann's actual handwriting.

The Congress's title "2010: A Homeopathic Odyssey" invokes the example of Homer's courageous hero, Odysseus, to emphasize this holistic science's triumph over 200 years of tribulation. Homeopathy's foundation on the universal law of similars is finally earning it global respect as a system of medicine. This congress will focus on how Hahnemann's brilliant past work has shaped important facets of modern medicine.

Some invited speakers include: Roger Morrison (USA), Nancy Herrick (USA), Will Taylor (USA), Carlos Campora (Argentina), Anton Rohrer (Austria), Andre Saine (Canada), Josef Schmidt (Germany), Didier Grandgeorge (France), Sadhna Thakkar

(India), Farokh Master (India), Roberto Petrucci (Italy), Klaus von Ammon (Switzerland), Peter Fisher (United Kingdom), Iris Bell (USA), Richard Moskowitz (USA), Todd Rowe (USA), Richard Pitcairn (USA).

Special topics will include: miasms as evidenced in contemporary medicine, new approaches in cancer treatment, state of the art in autoimmune diseases, breakthroughs in pediatrics and immunization, presentation of recent provings, insights into snake remedies, evidence based research in homeopathy, current developments in veterinary and dental medicine.

The congress will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Redondo Beach, California, with its beautiful view of the ocean and majestic beaches, strategically located only 5 miles from the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). Disneyland is a short distance away, as is Hollywood, art galleries, music venues, theatres and museums.

More information available from the [website](#).



## Scientific Framework of Homeopathy

'Scientific Framework of Homeopathy - Evidence Based Homeopathy' is the title of a new booklet edited by research coordinator Dr Michel van Wassenhoven.

This booklet is aimed at considering all important aspects of the scientific framework of homeopathic practice including ethical questions, evaluation of daily practice, looking at the level of scientific evidence of each of these aspects. It includes chapters on the general framework and ethical aspects, the framework

of homeopathic practice, a description of meta-analyses and systematic reviews, the results of economic, clinical and humanistic outcomes studies, 'internal', heuristic evidence, the homeopathic medicine and its specific activity, physics of homeopathic medicines, veterinary homeopathy, questioning homeopathic medicines, and homeopathy and epidemic diseases.

It can be downloaded from the [ECHO website](#).



### Conference on added value of CAM for EU

The ECH is one of the organisers of a politically high-level informative and interactive conference on the topic: The added value of CAM and integrated healthcare for the EU Public Health Agenda, which is scheduled for Spring 2011 in Brussels.

All relevant stakeholders in the field of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) are involved in the organisation of this event. Members of the European Parliament, officials from the relevant Directorates-General of the European Commission, European Union agencies, WHO and non-governmental organisations related to healthcare, as well as health insurers, consumers' organisations and the media will be invited.

The conference will highlight the added value of the holistic approach of CAM and will present CAM as an essential part of a more integrated approach to the public health agenda across the European Union. The programme is customised to address the current important issues in the EU Public Health agenda. These issues include prevention and health promotion, patients' choice and empowerment, patient safety, patient-centred health services, palliative care, health economics (cost-effectiveness and cost-savings), health workforce and regulation of practice, health inequalities, mental health, health systems integration and health information.

More information will follow in the next issue of the newsletter.

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