

Editorial

Homoeopathy: Gentle Medicine

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From the beginning, homoeopathy has faced critical attacks from its opponents, the anti-homoeopathic sceptics who fail to understand homoeopathy on one side and the unscientific homoeopaths who fail to explain homoeopathy in a scientific way.

During Hahnemann's time, the journals printed scathing critiques, and the doctors of conventional system schemed to delay publications on homoeopathy which caused great disappointment to followers of homoeopathy. Hahnemann himself suffered attacks of medical establishments of his time which used all legal and political weapons to disprove the scientificity of homoeopathy. The pharmacists accused him of preparing and dispensing his own medicines which led to the Leipzig City Council ordering Hahnemann to cease such activity in 1820, thus forcing him to move to Kothen. This propaganda against homoeopathy remained unabated, terming it as bogus and useless but homoeopathic scientists were silently and diligently working. In 1988 on editorial in journal 'Nature' titled 'when to believe the unbelievable' observed that famous high-dilution experiments by Beneveniste's group had no reproducibility.

The 'Lancet' journal in August 2005, by publishing the systematic review of homeopathy versus allopathy by Shang et al, prophesied 'the end of Homoeopathy'. Though the doctors of modern medicine pronounce the lack of benefit by homoeopathy bold and loud yet they also whisper 'more dilute the evidence for Homoeopathy becomes the greater seems it's popularity' and advise their fellow colleagues to be honest with themselves about the failings to address patients' needs for personalised care.¹

On 21 August 2014, an article was published in 'The Telegraph' equating homoeopathy with Reiki healing and dubbing it as magical heal. In February 2015 came the NHMRC report which pronounced that there is no reliable evidence that homoeopathy is effective for treating health conditions that are chronic, serious or could become serious.²

The problem with homoeopathy is the nature of its medicines, their method of preparation and their mechanism of action. The controversy surrounding homeopathy is that the medicines do not contain a single molecule of the starting material due to ultrahigh dilutions and is therefore,

no more than a placebo. Nevertheless, homoeopathic dilutions are not just serial dilutions, their preparation also involves mechanical agitation by potentisation resulting in liberation of lot of energy due to the turbulence each stroke causes. The study of high dilutions is a puzzling subject which has given enough food for thought to the sceptics, but this problem of nature of homoeopathic medicines has at the same time attracted many a scientist from chemistry, physics, microbiology, biotechnology to its fold.

Paolo Bellavite and Lucietta Betti suggest that the intense agitation during succussion strokes during potentization impact nano-heterogenous structure to water by means of phenomena such as coherence, epitaxy, temp-pressure alterations and formation of nanobubbles containing gaseous inclusions of source materials of medicines.³

IIT Bombay researchers found that there are nanogram quantities of starting material still present in these 'high potency' remedies in the form of nanoparticles using electron microscopy, electron diffraction and atomic spectroscopy.⁴ This was termed as 'fascinating observation' in the Guest editorial 'Do serial dilutions really dilute' of the premier journal 'Homoeopathy'.⁵

Iris R. Bell and Mary Koithan hypothesise that liquid succussions during remedy preparation create 'top-down' nanostructures which act as biological signals that stimulate the organising allostatic biological stress response network, evoking modulatory, self-organising charge.⁶

Notwithstanding the 'often non measurable' levels of molecules in dilutions beyond Avogadro's constant and still non-understood mechanism of action, homoeopathy has survived and shall remain widely practiced system of medicine with high level patient satisfaction.

In this issue, we present 'Establishing Scientific identity of Homoeopathy' by Lex Rutten basically a mathematician and statistician who has been untiringly engaged in advancement in prognostic factor research in homoeopathy.

You will also enjoy reading 'Characterization of atropine in high aqueous dilutions for homoeopathic use,' the alkaloid of Belladonna, successfully used by Dr Hahnemann to save many lives during the scarlatina epidemic in 1800. We pay tribute to Creasy Sheilagh, who was a noted homeopath,

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presenter of seminars and author of articles and books. We remember Dr Constantine Hering, one of the favourite disciples of Hahnemann and father of Homoeopathy in United States who was born on 1 January 1800 in Germany, in a newly introduced section 'Memoirs'.

Two case reports, one case series and several original articles on 'effectiveness of adjunctive mother tinctures to individualised homeopathic treatment of chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases: an open randomised pragmatic pilot trial' are other inclusions which make an interesting read.

I would like to thank the reviewers who have spared their valuable time in enhancing the quality of papers that appear in every issue and appreciate the colossal effort put in by the editorial office and the production team in bringing to you the Homoeopathic Links in its present form.

All the authors deserve an ovation for their constant patronage and hope that they will keep on sharing their work for publication in Links so that homoeopathy emerges stronger.

Wishing all the readers a very happy and healthy New Year 2020!

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