

ECCH news

European Central Council of Homeopaths – January 2011



Scientists find potentiation produces nanostructures

Recently published research has given further indication that the new field of nanotechnology may provide the explanation as to what happens to the source materials of homeopathic medicines when they are potentised to dilutions beyond Avogadro's number. Earlier in the year Nobel Prize winner Prof. Luc Montagnier, postulated a mechanism he considers may explain how homeopathic medicines' informational content is created and maintained. He reported findings from his research that some DNA sequences belonging to pathogenic bacteria and viruses are able to induce specific structures of nanometric size in water. When sufficiently diluted in water, these structures emit a spectrum of electromagnetic waves of low frequencies¹ Now scientists have reported results of recent research that indicates the existence of nanostructures in potentised medicines².

Using market samples of metal-derived medicines from reputable manufacturers, scientists at IIT_B India have demonstrated by Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM), electron diffraction and chemical analysis by Inductively Coupled Plasma-Atomic Emission Spectroscopy (ICP-AES), the presence of physical entities in these extreme dilutions, in the form of nanoparticles of the starting metals and their aggregates.

References: 1. Signals are produced by aqueous nanostructures derived from bacterial DNA sequences <http://www.springerlink.com/content/0557v31188m3766x/>
2. Chikramane PS, Suresh AK, Bellare JR, Kane SG (2010). Extreme homeopathic dilutions retain starting materials: a nanoparticulate perspective. *Homeopathy* 2010; 99: 231-242. [Article Link](#)

Nobel Laureate declares high dilution phenomena are 'something'

Prof. Luc Montagnier, virologist and 2008 Nobel Prize winner for his pioneering research into HIV, gave a rare interview in December 2010 in which he stated he is moving to China to continue his research into the electromagnetic waves that he says emanate from the highly diluted DNA of various pathogens. In the interview he states that one main reason he is moving his research to China is to escape the 'intellectual terrorism' he has experienced in the West, something he says Jacques Benveniste was subject to and something all too familiar to homeopaths.



When asked whether he thought his recent research discoveries were relevant to homeopathy he stated, "I can't say that homeopathy is right in everything. What I can say now is that the high dilutions are right. High dilutions of something are not nothing. They are water structures that mimic the original molecules. We find that with DNA, we cannot work at the extremely high dilutions used in homeopathy; we cannot go further than a 10-18 dilution, or we lose the signal. But even at 10-18, you can calculate that there is not a single molecule of DNA left. And yet we detect a signal.'

References: (1) Science 24 December 2010 Vol 330 <http://www.sciencemag.org>

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National News

ECCH meeting held in Sofia to support Bulgarian homeopaths

ECCH held the second meeting of its 20th anniversary year on 17-20 October in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. Before getting down to the business of the meeting some Council representatives who arrived early undertook an invigorating and inspiring walk up to the famous '7 Lakes' in mountains near Sofia. The meeting itself addressed a number of issues among which was the pressing political situation in Bulgaria where legislation was introduced in 2005 that restricted the practice of homeopathy to medical doctors only. Prior to the Council meeting the ECCH Vice-Chair Zofia Dymitr and General Secretary Stephen Gordon accompanied Stanka Mihalkova, Chair the Bulgarian Society of Homeopaths and Lilia Dimitrova, the HSB representative to ECCH to two meetings, first with a representative of the Bulgarian Government committee dealing with health regulation and then with a Member of Parliament of the Health Committee of the Bulgarian Parliament.



ECCH High aspirations – feet on the ground

The homeopathy representatives pointed out that the regulation of the practice of homeopathy in Bulgaria presents a stark contrast to developments in other EU countries such as Portugal, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and the United Kingdom where moves to regulate the practice of CAM practitioners, including homeopaths, are taking place in an appropriate and proportionate manner so as to give citizens the possibility of the maximum access while ensuring minimum standards of safe and effective practice.

Democracy regains the place of CAM in Swiss health insurance scheme

In 2005 the Swiss Government stopped the reimbursement of 5 CAM therapies including homeopathy through its national health insurance scheme for Swiss citizens, claiming a lack of evidence of efficacy and effectiveness. This act gave rise to a national campaign that drew enough popular support to force the Government to carry out a referendum in 2009. The result was that Swiss citizens voted by a majority of 2:1 that the CAM services should be re-instated into the national health insurance scheme. The Government has had to grudgingly respond to the outcome of this democratic process but has added a provision that the reinstatement is dependent on evidence of efficacy and effectiveness of the CAM therapies included being produced within the next 6 years in order for the funding to be continued beyond 2017.

At present only doctors providing CAM for their patients are covered by the national health insurance scheme. Swiss homeopaths that are members of ECCH Swiss members HVS are currently included in private health insurance schemes only. Nonetheless, the result of this unique Swiss democratic process sends out a clear signal that citizens in Switzerland value and appreciate the integrated use of homeopathy and other CAM therapies as part of their healthcare. **There is a strong suspicion that if such referendums were carried out in other countries there would be similar results.**

http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss_news/Alternative_therapies_are_put_to_the_test.html?cid=29242484

French TV channel broadcasts a 2-hour live enquiry into homeopathy

In one of their most highly viewed programmes ever, the popular channel TV 5 in France broadcast a 105-minute investigatory programme about homeopathy on Tuesday 11 March 2011. Entitled 'Homeopathy; mystery and balls of sugar' the programme presented the by now familiar objections of sceptics balanced with input from French homeopathic doctors and vets and from a representative of Boiron Laboratories, the largest manufacturer of homeopathic medicines in France.

The placebo effect was a strong focus of the discussions and a psychiatrist on the programme went so far as to imply that hundreds of chickens that had responded positively to homeopathic treatment in a simple experiment carried out by a homeopathic vet were all influenced to do so by the vet and farmer involved! (So if he doesn't believe in homeopathy does he believe in ESP?)

Another scenario featured a patient who was advised by her homeopathic doctor to use homeopathy prophylactically for malaria. She contracted the disease on her travels and came close to death. On her recovery she did not abandon homeopathy 'because it works for me' but did change her homeopathic doctor.

During and after the programme thousands of French people telephoned, texted and emailed in their experiences and questions. **At the end there was a very strong impression that homeopathy is a valued part of French health care. For millions of French people, 1000s of French doctors and the pharmacies in every town and village - ça marche!**



EU NEWS

European Parliament MEP CAM Interest Group makes homeopathic and other CAM medicines its first topic

On 16 November 2010 the first open meeting of the newly formed **European Parliament Complementary and Alternative Medicine Interest Group (EPCAMIG)** took place in the European Parliament in Brussels. The formation of the Interest Group is the successful outcome of one of a number of projects that the EU CAM Stakeholder Group (of which ECCH is a member represented by ECCH General Secretary Stephen Gordon) has been working on over the past year. A central core of MEPs have agreed to be co-chairs of the organising committee and a much longer list of MEPs have expressed an interest in CAM. The secretarial, advisory and other back-up work is carried out by the EU CAM Stakeholder Group.

A packed meeting room listened first to a presentation from Mr Nils Behrndt, Deputy Head of DG SANCO Commissioner Dalli's Cabinet and responsible for Pharmaceuticals. Mr Behrndt painted a rather rosy Commission perspective stating that from their information "*the framework is level and the system is working quite well.*" The two presentations that followed made it very clear that this view is not supported by actual experience in the natural health sector, especially for homeopathic and herbal medicines. At the end of his presentation Mr Behrndt made it clear that the Commission would intervene to improve the frameworks in the event of sufficient pressure from the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers.

Mr Nand de Herdt, President of the European Coalition of Homeopathic and Anthroposophic Medicines Manufacturers (ECHAMP), and Mr Rob Verkerk of the Alliance for Natural Health (ANH) spoke on the problems facing manufacturers, patients and practitioners across Europe with regards to homeopathic, anthroposophic and herbal medicines including those from the Chinese and Ayurvedic traditions. **The common complaint was on how the EU legislation covering homeopathic and herbal medicines is resulting in an accelerating threat to the availability of these products to EU Citizens.**



Following the presentations questions were posed by those others present and a lively discussion took place before the MEP chairing the meeting Ms. Elana Antonescu MEP finally brought it to a close. In her summary she indicated that there is a growing number of her MEP colleagues with strong interests in the area, largely stimulated by members of the public who have been filling MEP mailboxes with their concerns. She said that the EPCAMIG represents a vital forum to deal with problems caused by European legislation, and it is in the public interest, as well as that of the Parliament and the Commission, to resolve these problems.

Healthy aging set to dominate the EU health agenda

Europe's ageing population is one of its most pressing societal challenges, with the number of people over 65 expected to rise from 81 million in 2008 to 151 million in 2060. During the same period the ratio of people of working age to people over 65 is expected to decrease from 4:1 to 2:1. This demographic change has far-reaching implications for the budgets and sustainability of the health and social systems, including healthcare, pensions and long-term care. The situation is compounded by a dwindling health and care sector workforce. It is for this reason that the European Commission has launched a major initiative entitled **European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (AHAIP)**. The partnership aims to build on coherent and integrated, stakeholder-led, citizen-centred and innovation-driven actions. The overarching goal is, by 2020, to increase the average healthy life years (HLY) in the European Union by two years.

The initiative presents a major opportunity for homeopathy and complementary medicine in general because prevention based on a holistic understanding of the causes of chronic degenerative disease is very much at the centre of the strategy. Additionally, the CAM workforce presents a hitherto unrecognized resource in terms of the overall workforce that can engage in the agenda. The European Federation for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (EFCAM) of which ECCH is an active member, has successfully applied to be a member of the Partnership and has already submitted a paper on CAM and Healthy Aging as part of the application process. The Commission has now launched an online consultation on Healthy Aging to which ECCH and EFCAM will be responding by the cut-off date of 28 January.

Research News

High levels of satisfaction with homeopathy reported in pediatric oncology in Germany

In a recently published article in the open access journal 'Evidence Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine' researchers compared the responses of homeopathy users (HUs) and users of other forms of CAM (NHUs) in pediatric oncology (PO) in Germany. The study concludes that homeopathy is the most frequently used CAM treatment in PO in Germany. HUs sustain treatment and therapies considerably longer than NHUs. Most families who had used homeopathy before their child was diagnosed with cancer also used homeopathy for the treatment of their child's cancer. Compared to other CAM treatments, patient satisfaction with homeopathy appears to be very high. The study also shows that non-medical practitioners played a considerably greater role as source of information than did treating physicians.

Längler A, Spix C, Edelhäuser F, Kameda G, Kaatsch P, Seifert G. Use of homeopathy in pediatric oncology in Germany. *Evid Based Complement Alternat Med* 2011; 867151. Doi: 10.1155/2011/867151. Last downloaded from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2958565/> on 02.01.2011.

Six percent of all families with adolescent children visited a homeopath

A total of 7888 mothers and/or fathers of adolescent children (minimum 13 years of age) were invited to participate in a total population healthcare study in a region of Norway. Prevalence of visiting CAM practitioners in general was 20 %, whereas 6 % had visited a homeopath over the past 12 months. Mothers were more likely to visit homeopaths than fathers, and homeopathy was used by a more diverse population compared to e.g. chiropractors.

Steinsbekk A. Families' visits to practitioners of complementary and alternative medicine in a total population (the HUNT studies). *Scand Joun Publ Health* 2010; 38(Suppl 5): 96-104.

Complex homeopathic remedy of limited effect after surgery

In a double blind, placebo-controlled trial 80 consecutive patients were randomized to receive either Traumeel or indistinguishable placebo. A transient reduction in daily maximum post-operative pain favoured Traumeel on the day of the surgery ($p=0.04$). No long-term effects were found.

Singer RS, Amit-Kohn M, Weiss S, Rosenblum J, Maoz G, Samuels N, Lukasiewicz, Freedman L, Paltiel O, Itzhaki M, Niska M, Oberbaum M. Traumeel S[®] for pain relief following hallux valgus surgery: a randomized controlled trial. *BMC Clinical Pharmacology* 2010; 10:9. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6904/10/9>

Homeopathy protects cows from ticks

Cattle tick poses serious problems for Brazilian farmers, in particular because the parasite often develops resistance to pesticides. Researchers therefore evaluated the efficiency of homeopathic remedies for 34 tick-infested cows. The cows were either given ticks in C12 and later C30 potency and a mineral salt, or mineral salt alone. More than two years after treatment start significant differences were found in all measured parameters, including tick-mass ($p=0.0008$), egg mass ($p=0.0044$), egg-hatching rate ($p=0.0017$) and reproductive efficiency ($p=0.0044$). **Conclusion:** There was significant interference in the life cycle of ticks recovered from cows treated with tick biotherapeutic 12cH and 30cH.

Gazim ZC, Borges Padilha Ferreira F, Vieira da Silva A, Bolognese KC, merlin E, Messa V, Almeida de Jesus R, Coutinho CA, Monteiro da Silva LC. Efficiency of tick biotherapeutic on the control of infestation by *Rhipicephalus (Boophilus) microplus* in Dutch dairy cows. *Int J High Dilution Res* 2010; 9(33): 156-164.

Homeopathy for plants – promising results

Homeopathically prepared Alumina and Calcarea carbonica in C6 and C12 potencies was used to test the influence on toxic levels of aluminium in lettuce seeds. Aluminium toxicity is the most important factor limiting plant growth. Plants treated with the potentised remedies differed significantly to non-treated controls. Researchers concluded the two homeopathic remedies significantly influence the vigour of lettuce seeds. No direct effect of potentised fungus was found on fungus affecting tomato plants in a recently published study. However, the severity of the disease was reduced. Further research is needed before this approach may be recommended to farmers.

Monteiro de Toledo Piza Gomes Carneiro S, Davidson Bueno Romano E, Pignoni E, Teixeira MZ, da Costa Vasconcelos ME, Gomes JC. Effect of biotherapeutic of *Alternaria solani* on the early blight of tomato-plant and the in vitro development of the fungus. *Int J High Dilution Res* 2010; 9(33): 147-155.

Pereira Giradini Bonfim F, Rodrigues das Dores RG, Martins ER, Wagner Dias Casali V. Germination and vigor of lettuce seeds (*Lactuca sativa* L.) pelleted with homeopathic preparations Alumina and Calcarea carbonica subjected to toxic levels of aluminium. *Int J High Dilution Res* 2010; 9(33): 138-146.

Three new data-bases of research

Homeopathy Research Institute launches searchable RCT data-base

A homeopathy research database has been established by the UK based Homeopathy Research Institute. It includes randomised controlled trials (RCTs) of homeopathy that have been published in peer-reviewed journals up to 2009. Other such RCTs will be added in due course, and the database will be updated on an ongoing basis to remain a current resource.

The Homeopathy Research Institute aims to promote and facilitate high quality research in the field of Homeopathy. The Institute has gathered some of the world's experts in Homeopathy and Complementary and Alternative Medicine research to form their Scientific Advisory Committee. It promotes research in the field of homeopathy by:

- Facilitating research projects within international academic institutions
- Providing a peer review process for research proposals submitted to their Scientific Advisory Committee

The website and database are accessible at <http://www.homeoinst.org>

New searchable data-base of veterinary homeopathy research studies

During 2010 the Karl and Veronica Carstens Stiftung launched the first searchable data-base of clinical research in veterinary medicine involving homeopathy. The data-base attempts to summarise all available literature on original studies involving the use of homeopathy in the treatment of animals. It contains about 200 entries of randomised clinical trials, non-randomised clinical trials, observational studies, drug provings, case reports and case series. Twenty-two clinical fields are covered and eight different groups of species are included. The use of the database is free of charge and enables all interested veterinarians and researchers to get a quick overview of the status of veterinary clinical research in homeopathy. It can also serve as source of stimulus for ideas for new research or to replicate existing studies. The data-base can be accessed at <http://www.carstens-stiftung.de/clinresvet/>

Searchable Data-base of CAM Clinical Research Studies Launched

The Karl and Veronica Carstens Stiftung have also launched the CAM-QUEST®-databases which have been designed as search tools for people interested in responsible information on complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). The aim of the databases is not to rate clinical studies but rather to point out that a huge body of clinical research in the field of CAM already exists. They provide a fast and easy way to get information on most common diseases and their alternative treatment options investigated in clinical research with just a few mouse clicks.

CAM-QUEST® is a European-wide unique search portal which is regularly updated. It was designed for people interested in looking for scientifically certified treatment options within complementary and alternative medicine. Thereby, CAM-QUEST® (amongst others) provides a solid ground for discussions on CAM in general as well as the integration of CAM in general health systems. They help facilitate the preparation of manuscripts related to CAM and may stimulate the initiation or continuation of CAM research projects.

The CAM-QUEST data-bases can be accessed at: <http://www.cam-quest.org/en/>

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ECCH News is written and edited by Stephen Gordon and Petter Viksveen on behalf of ECCH
ECCH, School House, Market Place, Kenninghall, Norfolk NR16 2AH UK Email: ecch@gn.apc.org Web: www.homeopathy-ecch.eu