



Homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products

A thriving European tradition

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Homeopathy and anthroposophic medicine are widely used in Europe and other parts of the world and have been for decades:

- Three out of four Europeans know about homeopathy and of these, 29% use it for their health care - over 100 million European citizens use over-the-counter or prescribed homeopathic medicines¹
- There is significant to high demand for homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products in at least two thirds of EU Member States
- These medicines account for 7% of the European market for self-medication
- There are 60,000 prescribers of homeopathic medicines in the EU, that is 11.4 homeopathic prescribers per 100,000 inhabitants
- 3,000 licensed medical doctors are fully trained in anthroposophic medicine in the EU, Norway and Switzerland, and anthroposophic medicine is further prescribed by about 15,000 physicians
- The EU market for homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products is valued at over €1 billion a year (ex-factory sales).²

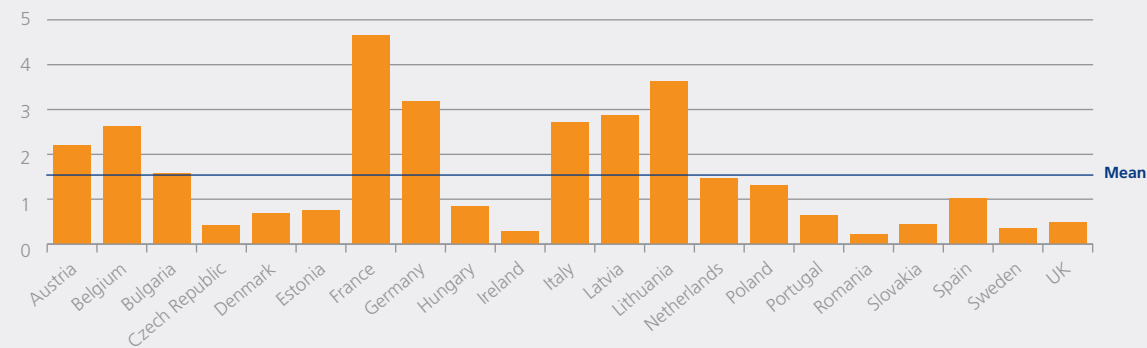
Recent market data

- 40% of households in Belgium use homeopathic medicine; one in two Belgians trusts in homeopathy to treat everyday ailments; 55% of users have used homeopathy for more than five years (IPSOS 2011)
- 56% of French people use homeopathy, 36% on a regular basis (IPSOS 2012)
- 53% of Germans have tried homeopathy and 25% are committed users (Allensbach 2009)
- 35% of Italians have a positive attitude towards homeopathy and 16% of them use homeopathy at least once a year (Doxapharma 2012)
- 15% of the population of Britain trust in homeopathy as a form of treatment (Global TGI Barometer 2008)
- The types of products most widely available in pharmacies are those requested for self-medication (ECHAMP 2012). ■

¹ Commission Report to the European Parliament and Council on the Application of Directives 92/73 and 92/74, Com(97) 362 final

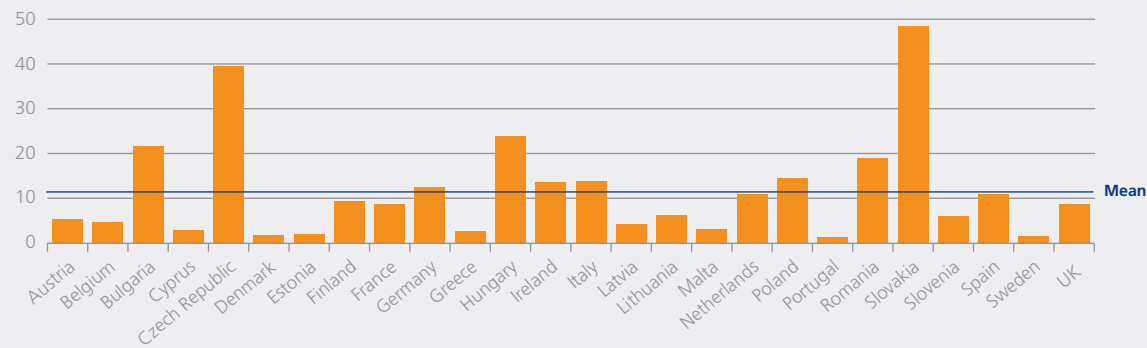
² The Availability of Homeopathic and Anthroposophic Medicinal Products in the EU, ECHAMP 2012

Sales of homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products per inhabitant (in relation to GDP per capita expressed in Purchasing Power Standard (€))



Source: ECHAMP 2012

Number of homeopathic prescribers per 100,000 inhabitants



Source: ECHAMP 2012

THE THERAPEUTIC SYSTEMS

Homeopathy and anthroposophic medicine improve health by stimulating the patient's own natural self-healing potential. Treatment is individualised: different people receive different treatments even if they suffer from the same disease. These therapies offer a high degree of patient satisfaction.

Homeopathy

An individualised treatment based on holistic assessment

Homeopathy is effective in both acute and chronic conditions. A homeopathic assessment takes account of the patient's actual symptoms, and in addition considers the patient's physical build, temperament and genetic predispositions. All such

factors contribute to the entire picture. A basic principle of homeopathy is that substances capable of causing disorder in a healthy person are used as medicines to treat similar patterns of disorder experienced by ill people.

Homeopathy was first developed in Europe more than 200 years ago by the German physician Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843).

Anthroposophic medicine

A model for integrative medicine

Anthroposophic medicine starts with a conventional diagnosis and includes in its assessment of the patient the imbalances of the body and a psychological, mental and spiritual dimension. It offers specific therapies enhanced according to anthroposophic principles. The treatment approach intends to bring about a process of development within the patient, reinforcing the patient's natural self-healing ability. Anthroposophic medicine uses both conventional and anthroposophic medicinal products.

Anthroposophic medicine was first developed in 1920 and is now used in both primary and clinical care in over twenty EU Member States. ■



THE MEDICINAL PRODUCTS

Homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products cover a broad portfolio of safe, effective and high-quality medicines generally derived from natural substances. They can be individually prescribed by a doctor or practitioner, or selected for self-medication for everyday ailments.

Typically, the starting materials for these products are mineral, plant (mainly fresh) and animal substances. The full range of products necessary for the proper practice of homeopathy or anthroposophic medicine includes approximately 3000 substances and several hundred thousand finished medicinal products.

Homeopathic medicinal products

For homeopathic medicinal products, the first homeopathic preparation is made from the starting material and then serially diluted and 'succussed' (shaken vigorously and impacted). This special procedure is called potentisation. Different potencies (dilutions) of the same agent are indicated for different symptoms. The more dilute the agent, the higher the potency.

Anthroposophic medicinal products

Anthroposophic medicinal products are manufactured using specific pharmaceutical methods as described in official pharmacopoeias. These include potentised medicinal products prepared according to homeopathic methods, as well as concentrated mineral, herbal or animal substances or preparations and compounded medicinal products prepared by specific anthroposophic methods. ■



QUALITY, SAFETY AND EFFECTIVENESS

As for all medicinal products, EU legislation requires homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products to be evaluated according to their quality, safety and effectiveness. The quality and safety of these products are well documented, and a number of studies demonstrate their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness.³

Quality

Licensed homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products comply with the quality standards of official pharmacopoeias for manufacture and quality control. They are produced according to Good Manufacturing Practice.

Safety

Long-term experience, as confirmed by studies, demonstrates that these medicines have a high safety profile. The frequency of adverse reactions to homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products is very low and serious adverse reactions are very rarely reported.



Risks from homeopathic medicinal products are minimal compared to those of conventional medicine because the concentration of starting materials is very low.

Effectiveness

A significant number of clinical studies demonstrate the effectiveness of homeopathy and anthroposophic medicine. In addition, observational studies consistently demonstrate real-world effectiveness - that is significant decrease of disease severity and major improvements for quality of life.

Cost-effectiveness

Patients whose GP knows homeopathy or anthroposophic medicine tend to have lower costs and live longer. Integration of homeopathy and anthroposophic medicine with conventional treatment is associated with better clinical outcomes for similar or lower costs. Homeopathic and anthroposophic medicines are normally less expensive than conventional prescription drugs, because they are generic, non-patented and non-patentable medicinal substances, produced at low cost. These therapies have the potential to offer significant cost savings to public health bodies and the wider economy. ■

³ See www.facultyofhomeopathy.org/research/ and www.ivaa.info/research/ for research references for each of these topics.

AVAILABILITY

The thousands of medicinal products used in homeopathy and anthroposophic medicine have been safely on the market in Europe for many decades. However, the current EU legal and regulatory framework means that citizens and prescribers are slowly being denied access to the medicines of their choice.

Inadequate implementation

Although more than twenty years since its adoption, the implementation and enforcement of European medicines legislation for this sector is far from complete.

Divergent implementation, interpretation and enforcement policies in the Member States make it extremely difficult for companies to operate across Europe. Rather than leading towards free trade and European harmonisation, the current European regulatory framework for these medicinal products is severely inhibiting industry growth and development.

Disproportionate regulations

The regulatory burden means that it is not sustainable to maintain registrations for the large range of substances and multiple finished medicinal products required for proper practice of these therapies. The regulatory environment, including assessment capacity and policy at national level, is not proportionate.

Insufficient availability

The availability of registered and/or authorised homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products for both self-medication and prescription in the EU is insufficient and the demand cannot always be met. In some Member States, availability is threatened by the lack of a workable registration process, and in others by an incomplete process for the renewal of existing registrations. In many, the number of registered products poorly reflects the high numbers of homeopathic prescribers. It is often the case that there is no functioning environment to meet the demand for products for self-medication.

Urgent action needed

Where the EU institutions adopt legislation, they have a legal, political and moral obligation to ensure that it is fit for purpose. The current European regulatory framework for homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products does not work and is unsustainable. There is an urgent need to create an environment that ensures the full availability of both over-the-counter and prescription products, allowing freedom of choice for citizens and reducing difficulties faced by prescribers as regards the choice of treatment for their patients. ■

About ECHAMP

The aim of ECHAMP, the European Coalition on Homeopathic and Anthroposophic Medicinal Products, is to enable its members to meet the demand from users and prescribers across the EU for these medicinal products.

ECHAMP recognises the important role that homeopathy and anthroposophic medicine play and can play in health care. It works to develop the industry for homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products so as to ensure availability of medicines for self-medication and medicines recommended by prescribers. It advocates in favour of an appropriate regulatory environment for these products in the EU.

ECHAMP was founded in 1999. It has about 50 company members from 17 EU Member States active in the production and distribution of these products (Full Members) and ten Associated Members (national manufacturers' associations from nine EU Member States and Switzerland).

ECHAMP E.E.I.G.

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