

ECHAMP NEWS

Brussels

April 2006

EDITORIAL



Health is increasingly a daily topic in the media. Dealing not only with threats such as viruses, new and emerging infections, nosocomial infections, allergy and environmental diseases but also prevention, salutogenese and healthy lifestyle. One new feature frequently appearing in these publications concerns the self-responsibility of the patient regarding health and healthcare. From this perspective complementary medicine, its practitioners and users may serve as an example.

As patients take increasing responsibility this may lead to increasing free choice on the type of therapy the patient may choose for treatment of their disease. Millions of CAM patients are already doing this every day: making a free choice and taking more responsibility for their own healthcare. However it is apparent from discussions held within the European Union these days, it seems to be very difficult to emphasise this point as much of our current legislation which appears to aim at regulating almost everything. There is probably one place where a balance between responsibilities and rights could be integrated in a distinct way: the constitution to provide a basis for the obligations and the rights for the citizens of a community. The discussions on the constitution of the European Union will be re-opening very soon and we have to make sure that this topic will be addressed. In the meantime as you can read in this News that decision makers increasingly believe in the importance of new healthcare strategies, working on a better future for health in Europe... integrating complementary medicine as part of a sustainable healthcare system!

Nand De Herdt,
General Secretary

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RESEARCH, CAM AND THE EUROEPAN UNION

(NDH) Research has been high on the agenda of the European Union for many decades. Nevertheless, the EU budget for research is substantially lower than the research budget for other continents around the globe. In the past Europe has missed opportunities in key research areas simply due to lack of available funds.

Dagmar Roth-Behrendt
MEP, Germany

In a press release the European Commission declares that the 7^o Research Framework Programme will boost Europe's GDP, increase exports and reduce imports, all of which will contribute to reversing Europe's problems of slow economic growth and declining competitiveness. It is one of the essential points of the so-called Lisbon strategy that for the EU to compete globally, it must make



the transition to a knowledge-based economy in which leading-edge technology and expertise will add crucial value to EU products and services. The EU-research policy is dealt with by the Directorate General (DG) Research within the European Commission.

Jerzy Buzek
MEP, Poland



Information can be found on the website:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/index_en.cfm

Currently the budget for the 7^o Framework Programme is discussed in the European Parliament. Within this programme a budget of €7.350 million is forecast for health research. The objectives are to improve the health of European citizens and increase the competitiveness of European health-related industries and business, while addressing global health issues including emerging epidemics. Emphasis will be put on turning basic discoveries into clinical applications.

When reading this you probably realise that complementary medicine will not have a major role in this programme. A minor role in terms of a small part of the health budget may be a possibility. Indeed, for the first reading of the Commission proposal in the European Parliament an amendment on the use and the potential benefit of Complementary and Alternative Medicine has been tabled by the German MEP Mrs. Dagmar Roth-Behrendt. If this amendment is accepted it will be possible to introduce CAM research projects for funding by the European Union. (See the amendment in the box)



Janez Potočnik
Commissioner for
Science and Research

The decision making process, in which all three European Institutions, Parliament, Commission and Council will be involved, will start in the beginning of May 2006. The specialised committee in the European Parliament, the Committee for Industry, Technology, Research and Energy (ITRE) will open the discussions

and will vote also on this amendment on May 15th, during their session in Brussels.

It goes without saying that ECHAMP together with all other professional associations and patient associations active in the field of CAM fully support the efforts of the MEPs bringing CAM into the list

of health activities that can apply for EU research funds.



We will keep you informed on the progress and outcome of this initiative of Mrs. Dagmar Roth-Behrendt to intro-

duce CAM effectively and efficiently in research policy of the European Union.

Amendment tabled by Dagmar Roth-Behrendt (MEP, Germany) on the draft report presented by the EP-Rapporteur Jerzy Buzek (MEP, Poland):

Annex 1, Theme 1. Health: Activities optimising the delivery of health care to European citizens - new indent:

'Optimising the delivery of health care to European citizens:

- Use and potential benefit of Complementary and Alternative Medicine. To identify successful interventions in Complementary and Alternative Medicine for improving the health and the freedom of choice of European Citizens'

Justification:

'That is why it is necessary to ensure enough financial means in order to develop and sustain the future research in the field of Complementary and Alternative Medicine, a fast growing sector that a lot of citizens in Europe are opting more and more for. This would advance the understanding of the clinical benefits and the mechanism of action in this field of healing practices'

HEALTH, CAM AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

(NDH) Healthcare services are dealt with in accordance with the so-called subsidiary principle, i.e. they are the responsibility of the individual Member States. The European Union can only play a complementary role. Parliament is the institution that plays this role most effectively. 'We know the public is sceptical about Europe but if people see us acting on things they care about, they might feel friendlier towards Europe' was a statement made by the green UK-MEP Linda McAvan, as she argued in favour of an ambitious health programme, including complementary medicine, which is a concern for majority of the population.

The European Commission deals with health issues with some hesitation as it is aware that Member States (i.e. the Council) will claim subsidiarity where possible and reasonable. This is why the 7 year Health Programme of the European Union has to function with a rather modest budget of € 1.500 million.

Markos Kyprianou
Commissioner for Health
and Consumer
Protection



The major aim of the EU-Health Programme is to promote (by means of studies, surveys and campaigns) a healthy life-style, to protect citizens against threats to health, to make national healthcare systems more efficient and finally to assure EU-wide accessibility to good healthcare for all citizens. These last two points are not supported by the Council which argues that this is covered by the health policy of the individual Member States.

John Bowis
MEP, UK



From this perspective the Health Commissioner Kyprianou believes that promoting complementary medicine is the responsibility of the Member States. Nevertheless during the discussions on the EU-Health Programme he agreed on taking a statement on the importance of Complementary Medicine in the introductory recitals of the EU-Health Programme. The justification as presented by the MEPS that tabled the amendment for the plenary vote in the European Parliament on March 17th is very simple and self-evident:

Amendment tabled by Antonios Trakatellis (Rapporteur/Greece), John Bowis (UK), Frederika Brepoels (Belgium) and Ria Oomen-Ruijten (The Netherlands) on behalf of the PPE-DE Group adding a new recital 1g:

‘A holistic and pluralistic approach to public health is necessary and therefore complementary medicine should be included in the actions supported by the Programme’

Justification: self-explanatory

The MEPs believe that a higher standard of health protection should be a goal of all EU policies. They are in favour of greater cross-border co-operation including exchanges of information on the

treatments available and even a reimbursement policy. Having in mind the mobility of patients and practitioners, as well as the right for free circulation of goods, more progress has to be made in the field of the health services ... including complementary medicine. Because of the cultural differences and the various traditions in the member states we have to accept that this harmonisation will come together very slowly.

We know from the ‘Kondratieff Waves’ that health will have the highest priority for the citizens during the first decades of the 21st century. The high expectations of the EU-citizen in regard to health and healthcare aimed at national and European decision makers has been recognised by the European Parliament: Healthcare is an extremely important topic, a daily concern for the citizen, who is waiting for the European Union to become more ambitious and active in this field; MEPs are convinced that an effective and successful EU-health policy could bring the institutions closer to the people and could give the European more credibility.



Antonios Trakatellis
MEP, Greece

The EU-health policy is dealt with by the Directorate General (DG) Sanco within the European Commission. Information can be found on the website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/index_en.htm

ECHAMP MEMBERSHIP ASSEMBLY 2006 - VIENNA



250th birthday of Mozart

(EVR) On April 25th, the Annual Membership Assembly of ECHAMP will take place.

Vienna, being the venue of the year while celebrating the 250th birthday of Mozart, will bring participants and speakers together in romantic city, where culture and science meet.

Companies from Finland and Norway voted on as new members broadens the European field of ECHAMP. At this time, being involved in 15 European countries is not only a positive sign towards the political world, but a challenge to attract companies from the other countries.

The different ECHAMP Working Parties and Subject Groups will give information on current situations in national and European matters they are working on. Our knowledge and our audacity to bring critical situations to the attention of politicians and authorities, proved to be useful and successful.



Vienna

For the 3rd time, the day before the Assembly, April 24th, a Workshop is being organised.

A huge programme will be covered, as Prof. Dr. Jütte, Director of the Robert Bosch Foundation Institute for the History of Medicine (Stuttgart-Germany) will present 'The Hidden Roots: History of Homeopathy in Northern, Central and Eastern Europe.' This presentation will be interesting to see how each specific country has a history to reference.

The second main issue is the ECHAMP Strategy 2006. Identifying points of focus and developing policy recommendations on ECHAMP's strategy for the future will be discussed with all present members.

In the evening a social event will lead the participants through the old city of Vienna, followed by a dinner in a typical Austrian Heurigen restaurant.

More than 70 participants from 15 different countries will join the Assembly. This symbolises how proud we are of the role of ECHAMP as promoter of the interests of homeopathy and that anthroposophic medicine is being recognised.

"COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE - A BETTER FUTURE FOR HEALTH IN EUROPE"



(PHS) With this title there is a 6 min DVD available. This DVD gives an easy and compact overview on the subject, including the comments of reputed doctors, scientists and important representatives of European health politics like the MEP John Bowis. It should help to create a better understanding of Complementary Medicine, especially in European political circles.

It is a joint initiative of European associations representing patients, health care professionals and manufacturers involved in complementary health care and in particular homeopathy and anthroposophic medicine.

The DVD can be ordered for free at the [ECHAMP Office](#).

MAKE THE VOICE OF 100 MILLION PATIENTS HEARD

10 European Organizations of Patients, Doctors, Practitioners and Pharmacists meet in Brussels



From left to right: Sören HAAR (PA-Consultant for EULAR), Robert Johnstone (ARI President), Nand Herdt (ECHAMP General Secretary) and Max Daege (ECHAMP President)

(FB) On March 29th the prestigious Prague House in Brussels was the venue for a meeting of 10 European Associations representing the patients using CAM, doctors and practitioners prescribing CAM, anthroposophic pharmacists and industry.

In the former residence of the dentist of the Belgian royal family stakeholders met to discuss another type of toothache: "why do politicians do so little in favor of CAM, despite the fact that almost one third of the population makes use of it?"



René de Winter (EFPAM President) and Colette Pradelle (EFPAM Secretary)



Enid Segall (EFHPA President) and Patricia Le Roux (ECH Secretary)

The main speaker was Robert Johnston of *Arthritis and Rheumatism International (ARI)* who has suffering from arthritis since he was three years old. He presented the success of his organization to make the voice of 100 million patients suffering from arthritis and rheumatism in Europe heard in the European Parliament. According to a report by the European Commission, the European Union has a similar number of users of homeopathy. He highlighted that many patients in that category apply CAM in combination with conventional medicine or even use it exclusively. The cardinal point is, however, that the patient should be free to choose the therapy they feel most comfortable with.

"Freedom of Choice of Therapy", Johan Hulshof (ECHAMP Officer Legal Affairs)



In a well structured campaign AAA (Alliance Against Arthritis), an alliance of national patients' organizations, scientific leagues and the allied

health professionals, succeeded in the adoption of a Written Declaration on Rheumatic Diseases by the European Parliament, asking the Commission and Council for an explicit priority for rheumatic diseases within the EU 7th Research Programme. In addition the Alliance focused on better access to treatments and a stronger disability legislation. Johnstone pleaded in favour of building alliances with other patients' organizations and for the approach of political issues from the patient's perspective.



European Associations representing the patients using CAM, doctors and practitioners

The participating organizations agreed on working together more closely in future. The first example of such a joint activity was the adoption of a Joint Communiqué in requesting the ITRE Committee to support the amendment by MEP Dagmar Roth-Behrendt on the introduction of CAM in the 7th Framework Program. Furthermore a DVD "Complementary Medicine, Homeopathy and Anthroposophic Medicine, A Better Future for Health in Europe" was developed. The six minute presentation of the DVD gives an easy to understand and compact overview of the subject. It contains comments of reputed doctors, scientists and important voices in European health politics. The DVD will be submitted to the ITRE Committee members together with the Joint Communiqué.

THE NETHERLANDS: ONE THIRD OF THE CHILDREN TREATED WITH ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

(FB) One third of Dutch parents prefer alternative medicinal products for their children or they adopt alternative medical treatment. Almost 50% receive homeopathic medicines. Herbal remedies are given just as frequently. Furthermore food supplements (vitamins) and manual therapy enjoy considerable popularity. Many children tend to receive more than one alternative treatment. These figures have been produced in a study by pediatricians of the Wilhelmina Hospital for Children and the St. Anthonius Hospital in Nieuwegein (Netherlands).

600 parents visiting the hospital with their children were requested to anonymously complete a questionnaire about their use of alternative medicine.



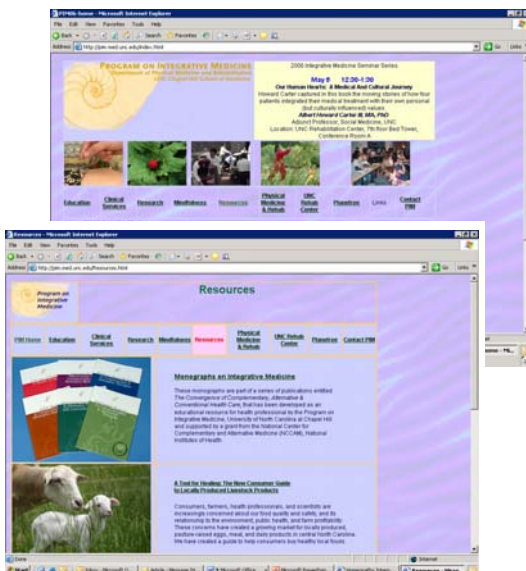
St. Antonius Hospital in Nieuwegein, NL

The results have been published in the Dutch Magazine of Medicine (Nederlands Tijdschrift voor Geneeskunde) in mid March. Almost all parents (94%) completed the questionnaire. The pediatricians were concerned that approximately 60% of the parents surveyed were not communicating to their general practitioner or pediatrician that their child is receiving complementary care.

HOMEOPATHY ON THE INTERNET

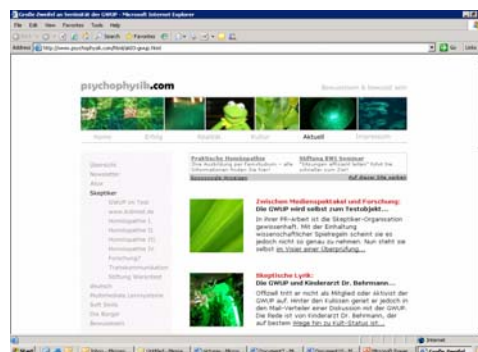
(JH) Homeopathy is a highly visible topic on the internet, which reflects its immense popularity. However, the quality of this information may vary dramatically from site to site. Many sites do not focus solely on homeopathy, but encompass a wider spectrum of complementary or integrative therapies. Some strive to provide objective or impartial information, others however are used to promote (political) opinions on homeopathic therapies. Unfortunately the general public may have great difficulty distinguishing between the two, since the opinions expressed may be falsely presented as objective or even scientific information.

<http://pim.med.unc.edu/index.html>



The aim of this brief survey is to highlight a number of interesting websites covering homeopathy and related topics which may be difficult to find using the term 'homeopathy' in a search engine. It is by no means exhaustive! The websites that are highlighted provide either scientific discussions on homeopathy or 'fair' (balanced) information for consumers. Nevertheless, a disclaimer that there can be no guarantee that all information provided on the sites is fully objective and/or valid is required.

Links to the websites under discussion can be found at the bottom of this article.



<http://www.psychophysik.com>

Starting with scientific online journals, a number are noteworthy: *Evidence-based Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, *Homeopathy*, *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*, *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, *The Journal of Integrative Medicine*, and *Integrative Medicine: A Clinician's Journal*. These journals, amongst others, provide high quality information on Homeopathic research. In addition, *Evidence-based Complementary and Alternative Medicine* and *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* are partially 'open access' journals, meaning that many articles can be downloaded free of charge!

In the field of research institutes and publicly supported initiatives for homeopathy and complementary medicine, the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the U.S. should be mentioned, as well as the CAM-Cancer research initiative which is sponsored by the EU via the 5th Framework Programme. Furthermore, the programme on Integrative Medicine Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation of the School of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill should be highlighted. Their Monographs on Integrative Medicine provide an interesting insight to issues such as the evidence-base and safety of CAM therapies.

Finally, two private initiatives are worth mentioning. The first is Positive Health Magazine. Its website, which requires a free of charge subscription, lists a wealth of information on health related topics including homeopathy. The second is the website of The Alliance for Natural Health, which provides many interesting topics including regulatory issues. However, the information provided on this site sometimes contains personal opinions.

Overloaded yet? The Holistic Healing Web Page has listed many more sites with information on homeopathy which can be explored at your own risk! <http://www.holisticmed.com/www/homeopathy.html>

List of Websites:

Evidence-based Complementary and Alternative Medicine

<http://ecam.oxfordjournals.org/>

Homeopathy

http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/journaldescription.cws_home/623042/description#description

Complementary Therapies in Medicine

<http://www.intl.elsevierhealth.com/journals/ctim/>

The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine

http://www.liebertpub.com/publication.aspx?pub_id=26

The Journal of Integrative Medicine

<http://www.jintmed.com/>

Integrative Medicine: A Clinician's Journal

<http://www.imjournal.com/imj/login/index.jsp>

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM)

<http://nccam.nih.gov/>

Integrative Medicine Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation of the School of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

<http://pim.med.unc.edu/index.html>

CAM-Cancer

<http://www.cam-cancer.org/>

Positive Health Magazine

<http://www.positivehealth.com/>

The Alliance for Natural Health

<http://www.alliance-natural-health.org/index.cfm>

ECHAMP Agenda

Apr 24-25	Board Meeting / Workshop	
	Membership Assembly	Vienna (Austria)
June 1	WP PR	ECHAMP Brussels
June 9	SG Nosodes	ECHAMP Brussels
June 28	Board Meeting	ECHAMP Brussels

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Are you interested in publishing information on homeopathy or anthroposophic medicine?

Do you want to highlight an event or activity?

Please send in regulatory news, research projects, publications, conferences, etc. to

administration@echamp.be

Deadline for an article is the **20th of each month.**

For the editing team,
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