

ECHAMP NEWS

EUROPEAN COALITION ON HOMEOPATHIC & ANTHROPOSOPHIC MEDICINAL PRODUCTS

Brussels

July-August 2006

EDITORIAL



The profile of complementary medicine, homeopathy and anthroposophic medicine is increasingly prominent in publications, public discussions and the decision making processes.

Complementary medicine was given a huge boost on 15 June when it was included by the European Parliament as a nominated theme within the European Union's 7th Framework Programme for research and technological development, the Commission's main instrument for funding European research. Even more significantly the EU-Commission has also accepted this amendment at the end of June. A final decision will be taken in autumn, during a second round of discussions in the Parliament and the Council, based on the positive voting of the Commission. This means that it is very likely that complementary medicine will be fully recognised in the EU's research programme.

In this 'summer break news' you will find information on a remarkable speech by Prince Charles as well as an interview with Prof. Dr. Jütte from the Robert Bosch Foundation in Stuttgart. Furthermore we discuss the court case of the specific anthroposophic remedies as well as the very positive safety profile of homeopathic injections. We have a look at a candidate member of the European Union, Croatia, its recent history, some information on the accession negotiations and the situation of homeopathy.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue, and wish you an excellent summer break, that will bring you plenty of positive energy for the coming 'working year'.

Nand De Herdt
General Secretary

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DUTCH SUPREME COURT REFERS THE ISSUE OF ANTHROPOSOPHIC MEDICINAL PRODUCTS TO THE EUROPEAN COURT OF JUSTICE



(FB) Since 2002, patients' organisations, doctors and pharmacists active in anthroposophic health care have been taking Dutch authorities to court to find a way to register a number of anthroposophic medicinal products. At present only a limited number of these products are regulated by the '*Homeopathy Directive*' and the '*Directive for Herbal Medicinal Products*'.

For the time being a significant proportion of anthroposophic medicinal products will remain on the Dutch market. A decree by the Supreme Court of The Netherlands means that the legal battle for an appropriate method to register this category of medicinal products will now be fought at European level.

The remaining option for another important part of the range of anthroposophic medicines is to register as a regular medicinal product. This disregards the fact that these medicinal products have been on the market for more than 80 years and have an excellent successful track record. The same products are on the market in other EU Member States under specific national regulations. These products have hardly any side effects and clinical research into efficacy is impracticable, since the cost associated with this research is disproportional to the relatively low turnover per remedy.

The Supreme Court in The Hague is now requesting that the European Court of Justice creates clarity about the possibility of national registration within existing European guidelines for this remaining group of medicinal products.



A campaign by patients resulted in a petition with 65,000 signatures that was sent to the parliament, making an urgent appeal to the Minister to offer a (temporary) possibility for registration, awaiting further harmonization of the European legislation. The Minister refused to execute the motion claiming that the European Directive does not provide sufficient room.

Organisations of stakeholders started summary proceedings in 2002 to ensure that the Health Inspection would not act against these unregistered medicines as long as no final sentence was spoken. The judge twice agreed with their points.

The Dutch State went into appeal against these sentences, finally to the Supreme Court which referred the case to Luxemburg. The final word is expected to be given in two years time.

(Source: Hans Nijmens, General Manager Weleda Nederland NV)

THE HIDDEN ROOTS

(MD) The Institute for the History of Medicine of the Robert Bosch Foundation in Stuttgart rediscovers homeopathic tradition in eleven European countries.

In April 2006 the Institute came out with a 90 page booklet on the history of homeopathy in Northern, Central and Eastern Europe. Countries that till now had not appeared on the history map of homeopathy due to lack of research, now have their place, with interesting details on the role of homeopathic doctors

and homeopathy in countries such as Norway, Sweden, Finland, the Baltic States, the states that formed the Austrian Empire, and even Greece with some roots stretching to Istanbul and Izmir.

Scepticism by the medical establishment and the official health system is also documented. The struggle against conservative positions, sometimes connected to century old laws against quackery appear surprisingly strong in modern societies like Denmark and Sweden, the latter still banning homeopathic medicines from being sold in pharmacies and threatening medical doctors with loss of license if they dare to adopt homeopathy into their daily practice.

Despite the detailed historical data and as the author and director of the Institute, Professor Robert Jütte, says in his introduction, some gaps still remain. But with the "preliminary historical survey" he hopes to awaken an interest in further and deeper research.

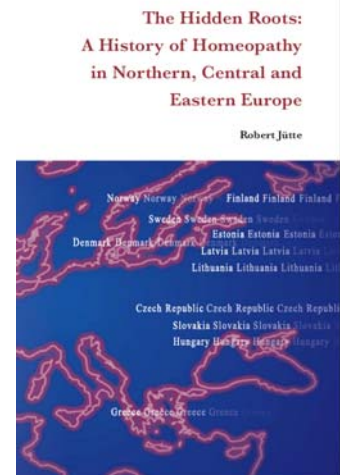
ECHAMP was pleased to be able to interview Professor Jütte for this newsletter:

Echamp: As you say, the archives of the Liga, which are kept at your Institute, proved to be a rich source of information. How would you propose to organise future research to try to complete the picture?

Prof. Jütte: I have looked at most of the homeopathic journals in our library and also at the Liga Reports. However, the most important next step is to study archival material in those countries which have a rich homeopathic tradition. This won't be easy. It needs language skill, historiographical expertise, and local people interested in the history of homeopathy.

Echamp: One problem is the many languages. Do you see your booklet as a possible stimulus for national research activities? On what basis would you be interested to collaborate with local researchers?

Prof. Jütte: The Institute for the History of Medicine of the Robert Bosch Foundation coordinates an International Network for the History of Homeopathy. Researchers interested in this field of study from any country in the world are invited to join this network and to find help and advice by getting in touch with the Institute, the leading research centre





Prof. Robert Jütte - presentation at the ECHAMP Membership Assembly

for this kind of study in the world.

Echamp: As we know, your colleague Professor Martin Dinges was the author of the "World History of Homeopathy" in which - except Denmark - the new countries could not be covered. Is your Institute now planning a new edition of this important work?

Prof. Jütte: Unfortunately, this substantial book was not a bestseller, and therefore the publisher does not seem to be interested in a second edition.

Echamp: What could be an explanation for the clear de-escalation of official resentment and increase of popularity towards homeopathy from the geographic north to the south of Europe?

Prof. Jütte: This is a difficult question. The Nordic countries have a long tradition in fighting what once was defined by the medical establishment as "quackery", while in Southern Europe, for example, the medical market place was less regulated.

Echamp: From your point of view and as a historian in medicine, what development in the quality of medical scientific literature and publication in peer reviewed journals regarding homeopathy can be observed, say within the last 10 to 15 years?

Prof. Jütte: There is still a lack of good studies, but homeopathy has made progress as has been stated at a recent workshop organised by the Robert Bosch Foundation, in which methodological problems in complementary medicine have been discussed with experts (including mainstream researchers).

Echamp: Professor Jütte, thank you very much for answering our questions.

You can download "The Hidden Roots" on the Institute of the History of Medicine of the Robert Bosch Foundation website
<http://www.igm-bosch.de/english/f7.htm>
 or request a copy to the Echamp Office:
administration@echamp.be.

NO CURE NO PAY - IMPROVING PATIENTS' HEALTH?



(JH) In his speech before the World Health Assembly (the supreme decision making body of the WHO) in Geneva of 23 May 2006, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales asked for special attention for complementary therapies and their integration into the existing healthcare systems. He pointed out that it becomes ever more important for humans to live in harmony with their surroundings. If

we destroy our environment, we will end up by eliminating ourselves. According to Prince Charles: *"The need to prevent deterioration, to maximize the quality of life and the ability of a patient to function, calls for a more holistic approach - one which respects an individual's choices, culture and expectations."*

Complementary forms of medicine that have developed in harmony with nature are a valuable source of knowledge and information. The Prince reiterated that although conventional medicine has greatly improved healthcare in the 20th century, its limitations should not be denied. He pointed out that complementary therapies can fill certain gaps which cannot be closed by conventional therapies. In this sense, one should combine the best of two worlds. In the words of the Prince: *"This is where orthodox practice can learn from complementary medicine, the West can learn from the East and new from old traditions."*

In line with this remark, the Prince referred to a practice in Ancient China where *"the doctor was only paid when the patient was well"*. Indeed a most interesting idea for better patient health and cost-efficient health interventions: No Cure No Pay for health interventions! It would most probably lead to further increased use of CAM therapies by healthcare practitioners, in order to improve patients' health.

It is well worth reading the complete speech of HRH The Prince of Wales on a new vision for the future healthcare of the world. You can find the complete speech of Prince Charles on his website:

<http://www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speeches/index.html>

STUDIES: HOMEOPATHIC INJECTABLES PROVEN SAFE FOR SUBCUTANEOUS ADMINISTRATION



(AA) The German scientific journal for anthroposophic medicine "Der Merkurstab" published in the first item of 2006 (Heft 1/2006 - Februar) an article on the study by a Dutch team of physicians*. The study charts experiences of homeopathic injectables prescribing practitioners with regard to safety issues and the extent in which these practitioners would feel restricted in case subcutaneously administered homeopathics were banned. The study design is a survey among 1693 doctors who prescribe those injectables for subcutaneous administration in 12 European countries. The data are based on experience with an estimated 36 million patient contacts.

Of the doctors 94.2 % choose subcutaneous administration because of its therapeutic effect. 96.4 % of the doctors never, very rarely or rarely observed any adverse reactions because of the subcutaneous form of application. The reported adverse reactions are mostly harmless (local redness, haematoma, local pain). Of the doctors, 98.1 % never, very rarely, or rarely observed any adverse reactions caused by the specific homeopathic medicinal product used. In addition, 99.5 % of the doctors desire homeopathic injectables for subcutaneous use to stay on the market and 89 % would be severely or very severely limited in their profession if homeopathic injectables were not available.

The conclusion of the study states that injectables for subcutaneous administration as used in homeopathic and anthroposophic medicine have a very low risk profile. An extremely small number of adverse reactions have been reported.

*Erik W. Baars, Ruth Adriaansen-Tennekes, Karin J.L. Eikmans: Sicherheit von homöopathischen Präparaten zur subkutanen Injektion. Eine Dokumentation ärztlicher Erfahrungen, Der Merkurstab, 1/2006, pp. 12-17. More information at www.merkurstab.de or in the ECHAMP Position Paper <http://www.echamp.org/press.php?group=3>.

Full copies of the study (English original text) are available on request at the ECHAMP office administration@echamp.be.

HOMEOPATHY AWARENESS WEEK 14-21 JUNE 2006



(KC) This year, The Society of Homeopaths and Nelsons once again established a partnership to promote Homeopathy Awareness Week 2006. Bringing together the expertise of the largest organisation representing professional homeopaths in the UK and the UK's leading manufacturer of natural medicines, this year's theme was 'Have a stress-free summer with Homeopathy'.

Activities included a nationwide media information campaign to raise awareness on how homeopathy can help with everyday problems during the summer. Society members (registered practitioners) were encouraged to make contact with local media and to promote the benefits of homeopathy in their local environment. Nelsons teamed up with the Society to provide support and materials for Society members (registered homeopaths) to go in to leading retailers throughout the country. Nearly 150 practitioners took part in this instore campaign, providing free information and advice to the general public instore, and answering any questions they may have about homeopathy.

CROATIA WORKS ON ITS EU-MEMBERSHIP AND ITS RESURRECTION, ALSO FOR HOMEOPATHY?



(NDH) Croatia is a country of striking natural beauty. It has a stunning Adriatic coastline with a fringe of thousands of islands and cities to dream of (Rijeka, Split and Dubrovnik).

Croatia's 4.5 million inhabitants have lived through a hard and tumultuous history for the last millennium, and more precisely for the last seventy years before its independence. After the first world war, Croatia joined the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, to become Yugoslavia in 1918, a socialistic federation of six republics. Following the death of the communist dictator Tito in 1980, the slow disintegration of this multi-ethnic Yugoslavian federation began, not without enormous blood shed. Slovenia and Croatia were the two first countries to declare their independence more than

ten years later in 1991; Montenegro has been the last one in 2006.



The war between ethnic groups and neighbours continued from 1991-1996 and only in 1997 could the real construction of the first independent countries start. The terrible consequences of the wars in the region were visible all over the country and the help of the UN troops was still needed. In 2001 the Hague tribunal indicts former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic for war crimes and crimes against humanity in the war in Croatia.

The green light for EU accession negotiations could not be given until the end of 2005 because of the failure to arrest the last fugitive Croatian war criminals. The opening of the accession negotiations with Zagreb started at the end of 2005 in part based on the guarantee of the Croatian government for a full cooperation with the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the war crimes tribunal in The Hague. Croatia received 105 million euro as support for the accession process in 2005 and 140 million euro in 2006. Zagreb expects to fulfil all the conditions and complete all tasks in time to join the EU in 2009.



The first homeopathy course in Croatia started immediately after the end of the war in 1995. Individual Swiss, Slovenian and English doctors and practitioners organised two year courses in Zagreb, Split and Rijeka.

About half of the participants were doctors. Nowadays there are four homeopathic associations, the most important one being the Croatian Association of Classical Homeopathy.

There are no laws forbidding the practice of homeopathy but that does not mean that homeopathy has been officially accepted. Currently it can be practiced by both medical doctors and non-medical practitioners.

The second (renewed) Medicines and Medical Devices Act came into force in 2003. The 154 provisions of the basic act had to be completed by a large number of bylaws. One of these bylaws created the Agency for Medicines and Medical Devices (website www.almp.hr/).



Another bylaw on the simplified registration for homeopathic medicinal products is very similar to the EU-Directive 2001/83 and is also available on the Croatian Agency

website under the following address: <http://www.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeno/2005/1195.htm>.

So far no real registration procedure has started. Pharmacies have also started to sell combination products. The regulatory situation is not clear cut but to date the authorities have not reacted. The accession contract (bringing the Croatian national legislation in line with the EU-legislation, the so-called *acquis communautaire*) will probably bring clarification on a possible transitional period for bringing the products on the market in line with the EU requirements as regards marketing authorisation.

ECHAMP Agenda

July 6	SG Mutual Recognition	Karlsruhe
July 11	WP Public Relations	ECHAMP Brussels
Sept. 7	WP Public Relations	ECHAMP Brussels
Sept. 13-14	Board Meeting	Karlsruhe
Sept. 28	WP Research/Scientific Committee	ECHAMP Brussels

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