

Press Release

Brussels, May 9th 2003

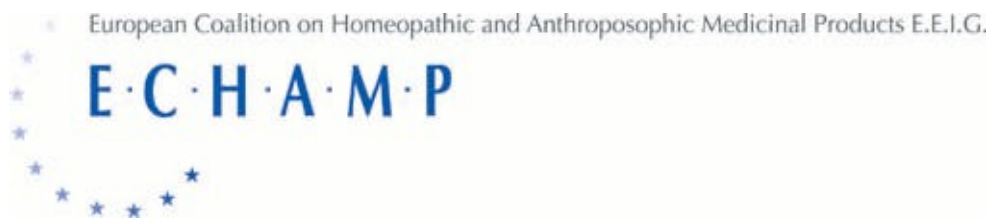
EU Institutions block internal market for homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products

110 million users ask for an appropriate legislation for the registration of complementary medicine

Many homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products within the European Union will disappear due to the inappropriate legislation, Directive 2001/83, which is currently under revision. This is unreasonable because complementary medicine has benefited from growing demand of doctors and the public in the majority of European countries over the past years. More than 110 million European citizens use homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products.

Health authorities have to safeguard public health, but they should also meet the expectations of the population regarding complementary integrated medicine. This means supervising quality and safety and guaranteeing free circulation of complementary medicinal products by making appropriate and harmonised rules.

The majority of homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products are in danger when they will come under the new legislation of the European Union Directives. The first homeopathic Directive was implemented between 1993 and 1995. The Commission Report of July 1997 and the Resolution of the European Parliament in October 1998 clearly identified the shortcomings of this legislation, mentioning simultaneously how this could be improved. Due to other priorities, the Council of Ministers in November 1998 postponed an amendment of the Directive. Five years later there are still problems in most of the member states: more than ten years after the publication of the first directive in September 1992, the procedures for registration and marketing authorisation for homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products have still not started.



In October 2002 the European Parliament voted progressively with the expectations of doctors and patients: Unfortunately the Commission and the Council of Ministers now demonstrate a reluctant attitude by once again neglecting or postponing the drawing up of appropriate legislation.

On the one hand the European Commission seems to look for the lowest possible compromise, which will not solve all the practical regulatory problems and can lead to another ten years of uncertainty. On the other hand the Council of Ministers is very reluctant and considers the homeopathic file still unimportant.

The European Economic Interest Group ECHAMP unifies more than 40 companies (95% of the market) who invest a high amount of know-how and funds in proving and documenting quality, safety and effectiveness of homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products. By elaborating appropriate legislation and regulatory framework for homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products the European Union should take into account that more than 110 million European Citizens use complementary medicinal products.

Consumers, medical doctors and manufactures will follow the legislation process carefully in order to contribute to the harmonisation process. The final aim must be to achieve a solid legal basis finalising the internal market, regarding homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products.

If you want your interest in homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products to be properly considered, contact your health ministry or consult your member of parliament (MP).

If you need further information please contact:

Bettina Appel, press ECHAMP

Tel.: +32-2-235.09.81, Fax: +32-2-235.09.82

E-Mail: press@echamp.be

If you want to get in contact with our member in Ireland, please contact:

- New Vistas Ltd. (newvista@iol.ie)