European Committee for Homeopathy

MINUTES COUNCIL MEETING 10 APRIL 2011

Location: Villa Aurelia, Roma

Present : Dr Ton Nicolai, Dr Ulrich Fisher, Dr Yves Faingnaert, Dr Michel Van Wassenhoven, Dr Yves Maillé, Dr Robert Ködel, Dr Jean Pierre Jansen, Mrs Enid Segall, Mrs Gema Pons.
Apologies: Mr. Gerhard Bissels.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Ulrich Fisher

Minutes of the last Council meeting in Brussels
The minutes were approved.

Financial result
2010 total income: 150,517.37 Euros
2010 expenditures: 121,861.15 Euros
Balance: 46,776 Euros

For 2011 (so far)
Income: 37,715.30
Expenditures: 29,534.72

Action:
Three signatures from the council were asked: JP Jansen, Yves Maillé and Michel Van Wassenhoven.
The Council discharged the officers for the year 2010.

Report from sub-committees

- Report sub-committee research
Dr Michel Van Wassenhoven

A/ The booklet Scientific Framework of Homeopathy, Evidence Based Homeopathy version 2010 has been put on the websites of the LMHI and ECH. A draft 2011 version is circulating already. We strongly ask to all national delegates that this booklet be sent to each national Academy of Medicine asking them to take position on homeopathy after considering the published facts. Collaboration for implementing the national situations has been asked to the political committee and the LMHI research group is also contacted for this purpose.

B/ Next topic: our involvement into **Research projects**. The clinical data collection "Cli-Fi-Col" is now open for receiving all cases, for further contacts please see Dr Carlo Rezzani. This data collection could also be used for clinical verification of homeopathic symptoms. The ISCHI research committee has now decided to enlarge the scope of the committee and to consider and support all kind of research projects in the future (not only influenza). We received 36 abstracts and after many discussions 6 (the more promising) are asked for full proposal. About future, in May we will discuss about other priorities as the elaboration of better documentation needed for the registration of our medicine (provings and clinical verification). We are also working on a new tool for evaluation of published papers rejecting papers that does not respect the homeopathic rules. Next GIRI meeting will be organized in Brazil, I will not take part. www.giriweb.com.

C/ Funding research could be pushed forward in a near future; money would be available very soon for research on homeopathy (Blackie Foundation Trust), during a meeting in London in June we elaborated a list of priorities that has been proposed to the responsible committee. I am invited to the House of Common in London in May for a meeting about and the promotion of research and homeopathy.

D/ More and more of the work is now considered in a close collaboration between ECH and LMHI. One of my tasks as LMHI Research secretary is to produce international guideline about clinical verification of homeopathic symptoms. As you have seen in the booklet Scientific Framework of Homeopathy, more and more publications are available on this topic but comparison is difficult because different methods are considered. ECH already proposed such guidelines years ago. New drafts of guidelines are circulating and we hope for a contribution of each country, Austria has already announced that these drafts have provoked a big discussion and they will certainly propose amendments to these documents.

E/ The problem of registration of homeopathic medicines in Europe needs to be more and more accurate. HMA (Head of Medicine Agencies) needs a better tool for evaluation of the homeopathic use of a medicine before registration. We worked on this project with Archibel to establish a list of documentation on homeopathic remedies that could be accepted by the HMA as "official HMA reference list of documentation on homeopathic remedies". This list will be the reference for documentation on Homeopathic medicine and consists of New provings, Traditional provings and Materia Medica references. This project has been presented to the HMPWG in a meeting in December under Belgian European presidency, they are very interested and I will have to explain the project to a working group in May or June. The aim is to facilitate the registration of as many homeopathic remedies as possible. I am asking for a special statute for "Remedies under Investigation": remedies that are not enough documented with the aim to keep them today but asking for further elaboration of the documentation in the future. In fact it will produce a list of remedies that we would have to study in priority (see B).

F/ More information and future activities are:

a) Presence at the yearly LMHI congresses. Next LMHI congress organisation can be reached using Internet: www.lmhint.org.
b) Collaboration with other sub-committees and the LMHI to obtain quality criteria for evaluation of proving and list of proving on the WEB; also a list of published clinical cases on animals and humans are needed.
c) Coordination of a LMHI working group on research.
d) ISCHI and GIRI meetings.
e) Next and ultimo for me ECH general assembly November 2012.

The question of Michel Van Wassenhoven's presence and action in the Belgian Medicines Agency was discussed. The Council is wondering if Michel van Wassenhoven's role in that Agency is not mixed up with his role as ECH-LMHI research coordinator. In addition, not everyone was convinced that his proposed "official HMA reference list of documentation on homeopathic remedies" would facilitate the registration of more homeopathic medicines or rather would increase bureaucratic obstacles.
Such a project may take 20 years and need lots of money while it is unclear how much money will be involved and if the ECH is supposed to pay the bill

Action:

A decision should be taken. ECH needs to be informed, if something is started.
A presentation can be made by Michel Van Wassenhoven, after the end of May 2011.
More time should be scheduled for the next meeting if Marseille on Friday 4 November.
We need to keep close contact about the project.

- Report Political subcommittee
Dr Robert Ködel

The problem of accreditation of homeopathic schools was discussed by politic and education sc. There was lack of preparation of politic sc for this topic, so there was spent too much time for discussion within politic sc.

The question was presented by education subcommittee as there was a problem inside the education sub-committee.
Longstanding problems in Italy between the two largest homeopathic doctors' associations: FIAMO and SIOMI.
Idea to install student congress.
A European student congress could be organized. For example Carstens Foundation.
It should be a good topic to discuss in Marseille: what is integrative medicine?

Action:

Dr Robert Ködel will step down next 2012.

-Report proving sub-committee
Dr Jean Pierre Janssen

People do not feel they can put energy, to comply with EU legislation.
Need to have fewer provings to be done.
Problem of doing medical research on humans.
Problem of politic in provings, JP Jansen was invited by Heel, to make a study on all kinds of provings. Quality of proving is to be integrated in a PhD. Companies need provings for registration
Next meeting in Berlin next week.
The mapping of quality issues is asked by Heel. A part of the money can go into the database.
The data will be owned by ECH as it is not commercial.
Concerning the guidelines, Frank Wieland could make sure that they comply with official international/European regulations.
The guidelines have raised some emotion, as some associations say it is impossible to realize a fully-fledged proving.
They will come to Berlin and discuss about it.
How strict should be the guidelines?
Tasks have been distributed, a lot will be done by Hélène Renoux.

The old discussion on provings of nosodes was taken out. The politicians are far too scared of nosodes

It should be interesting to propose, a small amendment to politics, concerning use of provings at national level. So that it is possible that provings can go on.
A group making amendments should be doing this: is there someone
Nobody knows in ECH.
Last question: why Berlin?
The date in Rome was not feasible for most of the subcommittee members.

-Education sub-committee
Dr Yves Maillé

Normal work is going on.
Before the meeting Nikos Tsamis wrote to Yves Maillé about the problem of the personality of one of the Greek delegates.
Problem of Greece: possibility to get all the schools together, except the HAHMC
Indeed there was an HAHMC paper sent to ECH stipulating that homeopathy was recognized in Greece officially, and according to Nikos Tsamis this is not true.
CEDH sent Marc Dellière as observer.
SIOMI was also present.
Another topic was about e-learning; no schools have asked for e-learning so far.

Renzo Galassi was shocked that ECH was accrediting schools providing 350 teaching hours.
Indeed for most European schools it is impossible to teach more hours.
Accreditation is based on the 2005 guidelines; now the accreditation is expected to be based on the 2009 Liga-ECH guidelines, including many more hours.
Next meeting in Marseille, the guidelines will be fixed to harmonise the new guidelines.

Action:

The committee has asked to postpone the reaccreditation system for 1 year.
It concerns only 2 or 3 schools for this year.

Problem of Vithoulkas School.
No solution was found.
Only some advice can be given, they do not ask for accreditation now. All sorts of problems were discussed.
This new school seems to be for doctors only: they want to be accredited in 3 years.

The input of the politic subcommittee is important:
Need to write a document precisely on this topic to send to Vithoulkas.

-Pharmacy Sub-committee
Gema Pons

Need for a serious working group.
The list is long for the sub committee and it is a big committee.
It is not clear, doctors and pharmacists are together and it is a problem.
See the future seriously.
The people that should attend are pharmacists association.
Practical things should be done.
It is asked that other sub committees can in put in the pharmacy sub-committee.

Want to inform, try and have a parallel association.
Make a last call to see who is going to come.
Position of private and publics pharmacists.
Next meeting with ECHAMP and the pharmacy meeting.
The contact with all sub committees is asked to get things moving.
Framework of ECH can be presented to deans of pharmacy faculties.

Teaching: Program for pharmacists should be slightly different.
Decrease materia medica, and increase manufacturing teaching.
Some courses in Belgium are given by pharmacists.
List of pharmacists who produce homeopathic medicines, it should be a link, but not on the website, because of conflict of interest.
Presentation of long list of remedies asked by Doctors. There was a meeting on registration in Spain.
The Liga has asked pharmacists to join.

Action

Now make a plan of action for rebuilding the sub committee.
It can take a few years, before the committee is fully working again.
We will have a Skype meeting, to put up the committee within 2 weeks.
The Council is going to look for pharmacists at national level.
Needs also to find the national associations of pharmacists.

- Patients sub-committee
Enid Segall

Normally the sub-committee does not meet together with the others.
Change of secretary. Eric Buelens is the new ambassador in Brussels.
The new Spanish group is a full member.
In Slovenia a group has been registered.
Next GA will be in Holland. In the UK, the situation is still very difficult. The website is on the move.
Two Italian groups belong to EPHPA, i.e one in Naples and one in Rome.
At a national level we need a list of patients with their email addresses who are able to react to attacks. We must organize ‘flying monkeys‘in all countries.
In GB a lot of discrimination and attacks are going on. All the associations are on the move.
The detractors have created a situation, that everyone including practitioners are round the table, asking professional advice on how to defend homeopathy. Even BBC is infiltrated by detractors.

-The documentation subcommittee will change coordination in May in the Netherlands.

The future of ECH document
Discussion of common paper sent before the meeting
During the last GA, there was criticism among some participants representing large national associations concerning the raise of fees.
Some associations feel it is too much to pay also because some associations pay less than they should. Regular increase, even if that is a compensation for price increases, was also criticized. Two fees, one for Liga the other for ECH was also too much…
Some working areas are overlapping.
The officers drafted a document: one topic ws the financial aspect (possibilities to save money). The second one was the working areas where ECH and LMHI could possibly team

up or that could even move from ECH to LMHI because of its global character (example Research).
It is the beginning of a process.

The coordinators were asked one by one to react to the document.

-Research
Already discussion. Working with research issues is not the same in Liga and ECH
Clinical and basic research are different research areas with different experts. It is not a good idea for research if ECH disappears and there is only Liga.

-Provings
Concerning provings, the quality of proving is the basic problem.

- Politics
The politic problems with guidelines. EU regulations are important in this field.
Saving of costs:
ECH politics is not ready to extend to world level.

-Education
ECH is really European, enlarged to world seems impossible.
The first one defines maybe large regions.
A common diploma is important. It could be interesting to circulate teachers. It can be good to upgrade the common teaching. The independence of ECH must stay important. Need to keep identity.

-Pharmacy
Unity can be important, it is necessary to keep the actual working group.

-Treasurer:
The biggest costs are the secretarial costs.
ECH and LMHI together have 2 secretaries that work half-time and 2 offices.
One full time is cheaper than 2 half-times.
According to the statutes, ECH must have an address in Brussels.
The question is whether we will really save the money in the long run: and how??

Action
All the remarks will be integrated in the document, discussed in sub-committees in Marseille.
Will be discussed in Berlin with LMHI on the 16th of September..

INTERNATIONAL HOMEOPATHY DAY IN Croatia - Zagreb
The International Homeopathy Day was a successful meeting. Small group with good symposium. Thomas Peinbauer from Austria was also there for Liga.
TV session. Also invitation to local congress for general medicine and meetings with health authorities.
A commission of the Croatian Medical Chamber will advise to the government that only MDs are allowed to practice homeopathy, which is leading to problems for the non-medical practitioners, who actually trained both doctors and practitioners.
Next year the International Homeopathy Day may be organized in Turkey, because this country needs help.
Dr JP Jansen proposes a presentation for proving like in Slovenia.

Standardisation proposal by CEN

Yesterday a presentation was made by Mr. Guido De Jongh, active contact of the Centre Europeén de Normalisation.
Standardization in Europe is on the go and is supported by the European Commission.
The EU can only harmonize existing qualifications.
CEN proposes standardization.
A matter of getting European standard.
Bottom up approach. Any group can start the procedure.
If the ECH takes on this procedure, ECH will lead it with the support of one of the national standardization institutes. It will take 3 years. In the subcommittees good reception of this project: public quality mark.
Finances need to be decided. It was suggested to use the money the ECH has earned by selling diplomas.

Action:

National Associations will be asked to discuss the proposal internally. In Marseille we will decide about it.

Other topics

On the 12 April 2011 Dr Ton Nicolai will give a presentation in the European Parliament, on chronic disease.
The CAM Conference, scheduled for 2012, has still got no finance but there is a hope.
Web site is on the move.

Next meeting

Marseille, 4th to 6th of November 2011

Dr Patricia Le Roux
ECH Secretary