

# INTERNAL NEWS

NO. 6 ■ SEPTEMBER 2016



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## ECH WORKSHOP ON PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION IN VILNIUS, APRIL 2016

ECH held its spring meeting last April in the beautiful town of Vilnius, Lithuania. Our now-traditional workshop was dedicated to the key issue of communicating ECH's work, and information about homeopathy in general, to the wider public. A roadmap for ECH was drafted within the H2020 strategic plan with consideration to this matter.

Sara Eames provided an overview of the main points to consider regarding communications for homeopathy, which was followed by an initial evaluation of the work done so far by H el ene Renoux, whom also highlighted the main areas to develop in order to build on current progress.

Several reports were given on the current situations, and initiatives being launched, in countries across Europe, offering a good overview on what has been successful and what can be replicated moving forward. Edit Katona, from Hungary, presented the very positive and enthusiastic PR project organised by the Hungarian association. Similarly, Cornelia Bajic, from Germany, presented details of their experience in this area to date. ECH vice-president Sara Eames also explained the very committed and coordinated action being taken by British homeopathic organisations in the face of aggressive opposition.

A related preliminary survey, using the SWOT analysis tool (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) attracted many contributions, which served as a basis to plan future projects that reflect the interests of ECH members.

The key points of action identified are as follows:

- Patients associations are our primary allies; we need to provide them with support and utilise their position to deliver our messages to decision-makers
- The ECH has a distinct responsibility to co-ordinate the sharing of information, harmonise reactions and to demonstrate solidarity
- An integrative approach with other CAM modalities and other health professionals involved in CAM is sought



*Workshop – Vilnius – The audience*

- There is a clear need for professional PR support (this is a vastly different role to that of a homeopath)
- Finally, education of the general public, journalists and of course homeopathic physicians will be crucial to the continued success and strengthening homeopathy in Europe

Following this session, the council decided that a working group dedicated to this work will be organised within ECH. People wishing to be involved can get in contact with the General Secretary by emailing [generalsecretary@homeopathyeurope.org](mailto:generalsecretary@homeopathyeurope.org).

All presentations are available for our members in the internal area of the ECH website: <http://homeopathyeurope.org/subcommittee-area/media-toolkit/>

## CURRENT SITUATION OF HOMEOPATHY IN THE BALTIC STATES



The 2016 Spring meeting in Vilnius provided a fantastic opportunity to meet our Baltic colleagues – below is a summary of the situation in each nation:

### LATVIA

The most positive situation for homeopathy in the Baltics is currently in Latvia. A homeopathic pharmacy has been in service since Hahnemann's era – it was founded in 1833 by German doctors residing in Riga. This pharmacy has been a significant factor in the survival of homeopathy in Latvia through successive governments. There are two homeopathic organisations functioning in Latvia – the Latvian Homeopathic Association (LHA) and the Baltic Homeopathic Union (BHU).

For the past few years the LHA has organised a two-year educational post-graduate course in the Centre of Family Health at the Latvian University, in accordance with the Vithoukas Academy.

The BHU was formed in 2010 by doctors from the Latvian Homeopathic Association, Estonian Union of Homeopathic Medical Doctors and Lithuanian Homeopathic Association to offer a common post-graduate educational platform for doctors from Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. The first major event organised by the BHU was the European Congress of Homeopathy, held in Riga in 2011. International homeopathic seminars organised by the BHU are held between two and three times per year, with participation by medical doctors from the Baltics, Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria and several other countries.

### ESTONIA

There are two homeopathic associations in Estonia; the Estonian Union of Homeopathic Medical Doctors, whose president is Inna Kazakova, and the non-medical Estonian Society of Homeopathy, of which Dr Saima Tishler is president.

Homeopathy is not a medical specialty in Estonia, and can be practiced by anybody provided that they have completed secondary school. Homeopathic training for medical doctors is not available in Estonia, which means that doctors are required to obtain homeopathic qualifications abroad. Homeopathic training for non-medical doctors is organised by Dr Tishler.

Homeopathic remedies are not available in Estonian pharmacies and it is also prohibited to order them via the internet or send by post. This is because they are not registered in the country, and there is nobody in a position to pay the excessive sum required to register homeopathic remedies.

Following the meeting in Vilnius, Dr Inna Kazakova invited all members of the Estonian Union of Homeopathic Medical Doctors to attend a common meeting. There is hope that 2017 will bring some changes in the status of homeopathy in Estonia due to the activity of CEN.

- *Dr Marina Afanasieva, President of the Baltic Homeopathic Association BHU*

### LITHUANIA

The situation in Lithuania does not differ greatly from other countries in Europe. There is no problem with availability of special remedies; several pharmacies – including one at the Medical University – produce remedies, and formula homeopathy is widely available. MDs are not banned from practicing homeopathy, although the official position became uncertain after some re-organisation at the Ministry of Health. Providing no major changes are made, a degree of self-regulation will be introduced. Some specialised homeopathy courses were organised previously in the Medical University, but these have been suspended for several years for bureaucratic reasons.

As in many countries there are severe challenges for homeopathy, a discipline that is often the subject of fierce attacks by the media which are not rebutted effectively. This is only part of the problem. There are also major problems with education, which regrettably is a global issue. Homeopathy is taught and practiced as an individual discipline, instead of incorporated with the modern concept of holistic and informational medicine. There is a tendency to rely on scriptures more than living tradition – even provings are not the part of everyday practice anymore. Studying homeopathy seems to place greater emphasis on reading or listening to the *Materia Medica* and using the computer/repertory instead of live practice. Homeopathy has always been somewhat isolated from other healing arts.

These are the main reasons why we have fewer young students choosing to study homeopathy.

- *Dr Simonas Stankunas, President of the Lithuanian Homeopathic Association LHA*

## UPDATE ON THE EUROPEAN STANDARDISATION PROCESS FOR HOMEOPATHY

In January 2016, the third and final meeting of the CEN working group took place at the main office of the Association Française de Normalisation (AFNOR) in Paris. Participants took this opportunity to firmly approve the last amendments and incorporate these into the document. The result of this working day is the draft text of the PrEN 16872 following the CEN enquiry. Upon finalisation and agreement of the group participants, the text was dispatched to all national mirror committees and all European representative offices for a formal vote.

After being voted on, edited and translated, the final text is to be available in September 2016. It will then need to be actively implemented in all the European countries.

On 6 July 2016, we received the positive result of the final voting. The document was approved ("yes") by 17 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Macedonia and Turkey. It was disapproved ("no") by the UK. 14 countries opted to abstain from voting: Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

This is a very positive outcome, which represents a great step forward for the recognition of medical homeopathic practice across the whole of Europe. Many countries were already keenly awaiting



*Association Française de Normalisation (AFNOR) – Paris, FRANCE  
January 2016: The participants of the CEN working group*

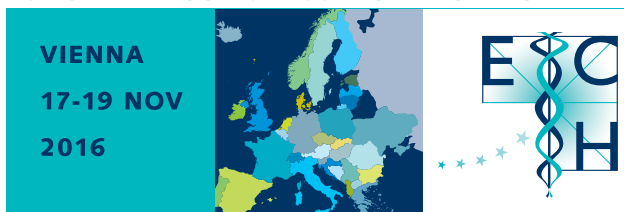
the vote, viewing it as a strong and positive signal for the protection of our practice at a time when sceptic activity is increasing.

ECH is already working to obtain the financial support of the EU towards the accreditation processes for the European schools fulfilling the requirements of this standard.

The WHO strategy for implementing traditional medicines in the global health care system addresses the topic of standardisation as a key area for benchmarks in all medical practices. More information should be available in the coming months, and the issue is scheduled to be addressed during the ECH congress in Vienna in November.

## ECH EUROPEAN CONGRESS IN VIENNA: INCREASING THE VISIBILITY OF ECH'S WORK

### EUROPEAN CONGRESS FOR HOMEOPATHY



In November, the first European congress organised by ECH will combine the usual subcommittee meetings with lectures given by external speakers. Some sessions of the subcommittees will be open to the external attendees, and the members of several subcommittees have taken this opportunity to share their work and research with the congress participants, aiming to make ECH's work more visible.

The Provings subcommittee will offer several lectures, with Jean Pierre Jansen introducing work carried out over several years on the harmonised provings guidelines. This a work of expertise on the minimum quality criteria required for a homeopathic drug proving, and has been established with the cooperation of the LMHI (co-ordination by Ashley Ross). Frederik Schroyens will explain how the provings symptoms are integrated into the repertory and Hélène Renoux, together with Izel Botha and Susanne Diez, will run a workshop on compared methodologies for provings. They will use their experiences of combining various methodologies to consider their complementarities and similitudes.

The Research subcommittee will focus on case report methodologies and tools. Robert Van Haselen will present his work on the HOM-CARE CASE guidelines and critical thinking, Carlo Rezzani will discuss the recent developments with the Clifcol programme and Reinhard Schäferkordt will present his own work on the Empirium programme, also touching upon the documentation of cases.

The Documentation subcommittee is seeking to harness the skills of its members to provide participants with the necessary tips for searching the information in the numerous databanks we have at our disposal, which tend to be greatly under-used.

The Pharmacy subcommittee intend to create a special setting for providing an overview about the tendencies for homeopathy in industry and pharmacy in the future. The task for an extremely dedicated pharmaceutical team is to guarantee the best quality and availability of homeopathic medical products in the future. The subcommittee wishes to collate knowledge about the tendencies in homeopathic pharmacy in future, availability of remedies, legislation in each country, the possibilities of compounding in pharmacies and quality criteria of homeopathic remedies. They invite everybody to take part in an important panel discussion with members of pharmacy, industry, authorities, politics, universities and research in order to providing a greater understanding about "what to know about homeopathic remedies in the future."

The political aspects of ECH's work will also be covered. Thomas Peinbauer, together with Peter Fisher, Liesbeth Ellinger, Elio Rossi, Enid Segall and MEP Aloys Peterle will address the great opportunity of the WHO strategic plan on traditional and complementary medicine 2014–2023. This will allow all the congress participants to have a glance at the relentless work put in by members and partners over the years within ECH!

More information on the programme can be found here:  
[www.homeopathycongress.eu/2016/index.php/programme](http://www.homeopathycongress.eu/2016/index.php/programme)

## ECH GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO BE HELD IN VIENNA ON 20 NOVEMBER



This year the ECH General Assembly (GA) will take place following the first European congress in Vienna. The congress itself is scheduled to finish at 5pm on Saturday 19 November and the General Assembly will take place the following morning on Sunday 20 November.

The General Assembly will be held in the same venue as congress – the Imperial Riding School Hotel – but the

registration process will be separate, arranged through the ECH secretariat. As such, official invitations will be sent to the ECH members ahead of the event. Attendance of the GA is free of charge for ECH delegates.

This General Assembly will present the opportunity to vote on financial decisions, the strategy for the next two years, as at every GA, and to elect the council members whose current mandates come to an end after a 4 year period. Thomas Peinbauer, the current President, and Leopold Drexler the Education Coordinator

have decided not to renew their mandates, while the other council members stand for re-elections. Hélène Renoux, the current General Secretary, has applied for Presidency, Dora Pachova (a long-standing Bulgarian member of the Education subcommittee) has applied for Education Coordinator, and Jaume Costa (representative of the Catalan association AMHB in the Political subcommittee) has applied to replace Hélène as General Secretary. Their application letters and CVs have already been distributed to the full member associations of ECH. All the member associations (which have duly paid their fees) will be attributed voting rights according to the number of their members. The planned agenda for the upcoming GA is as follows:

### Sunday 20 November, 9.00–12.30

- Short presentation of the achievements of the subcommittees during the last two years
- Financial report 2014/2016 and vote on the budget 2016/2018

10.30–11.00: Coffee break

- Presidential address
- Elections of council members
- Short presentations on the priorities of the ECH subcommittees

12.30: Closure and departure of participants.

## IMPLEMENTING WHO'S TRADITIONAL MEDICINE STRATEGY 2014–2023

EUROCAM, CAMbrella and the World Health Organisation (WHO) held a workshop in Stuttgart on 11 June 2016, during the International Congress for Integrative Health and Medicine, regarding the implementation of WHO's Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014–23.

The two key speakers were:

- **Dr Zhang Qi**, responsible for Traditional and Complementary Medicine at WHO
- **Dr Peter Fisher**, Expert Advisory Panel on Traditional and Complementary Medicine
- And **Dr Ton Nicolai** (EUROCAM spokesman), who moderated the meeting

The goals of the WHO's Traditional Medicine Strategy are to support Member States in harnessing the potential contribution of TM to health, wellness and people-centred health care, and promoting the safe and effective use of TM by regulating, researching and integrating TM products, practitioners and practice into health systems (where appropriate).

The workshop itself was intended to address three main objectives, which were:

1. to build the knowledge base for active management of T&CM through appropriate national policies;
2. to strengthen quality assurance, safety, proper use and effectiveness of T&CM by regulating products, practices and practitioners;
3. to promote universal health coverage by integrating T&CM services appropriately into health service delivery and self-health care.

*Dr Zhang Qi* reminded that the World Health Assembly (WHA) in its resolution 67.18 in May 2014 urged the member states to:

- Adapt, adopt and implement, where appropriate, the WHO strategy as a basis for national Traditional and Complementary Medicine (T&CM) programmes or work plans
- Develop and implement working plans to integrate T&CM into health services particularly primary health care services
- Report to WHO on progress in implementing the strategy.



*Dr Zhang Qi*

He reported the current activities supporting this strategic plan, such as the documents being made available (standard terminology on T&CM, databases on T&CM including national regulations and recommendations, classification of T&CM including their integration into ICD – International Classification for Diseases – and several guidelines). He placed particular emphasis on the normative processes, such as the one enhanced by ECH through the CEN standardisation, which have been acknowledged as major advances.

*Dr Peter Fisher* explained that T&CM was an important and underestimated part of health care, and that a cohesive and integrative approach would allow governments, practitioners and users to access T&CM in a safe, respectful, cost-efficient and effective manner.

He stressed the need and the relevance to see Traditional Medicine integrated within the Universal Health Coverage and Primary Health Care.

The successful future of Homeopathy could be contained in these statements.

## ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE: A PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE HIGHLIGHTED IN 2016/2017



EUROCAM, which is a European umbrella organisation of physicians, practitioners and patients in the field of complementary and alternative medicine, drafted a comprehensive position paper last November addressing the role of CAM in the reduction of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). This position paper arose following the serious warning issued by the WHO about the global threat to public health due to the increase of AMR.

On the same subject, we previously published the very detailed and thorough statement drafted by Lex Rutten, on behalf of ECH for the RAND questionnaire. Since then, a high-level United Nations meeting about AMR has been arranged to take place in September 2016. Global leaders will meet at the United Nations General Assembly in New York to commit to fighting antimicrobial resistance together. This is only the fourth time in the history of the UN that a health topic will have been discussed at the General Assembly (HIV, non-communicable diseases, and Ebola were the others).

[www.who.int/drugresistance/events/UNGA-meeting-amr-sept2016/en/](http://www.who.int/drugresistance/events/UNGA-meeting-amr-sept2016/en/)

This demonstrates the severity of the threat, and it is an ideal time to once again highlight the value that CAM treatments offer in dealing with this dilemma.

The second World Antibiotic awareness week, organised by the WHO, will take place in November.

[www.who.int/mediacentre/events/2015/world-antibiotic-awareness-week/event/en/](http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/2015/world-antibiotic-awareness-week/event/en/)

This will be an opportunity for CAM, and homeopathic associations to address the media, patients' and medical associations with the fully referenced report released by EUROCAM, and its numerous surveys and meta-analysis assessing the suitability of homeopathic treatments as alternatives to antibiotics.

<http://cam-europe.eu/the-role-of-complementary-and-alternative-medicine-cam-in-reducing-the-problem-of-antimicrobial-resistance.php>

## 3RD HOMEOPATHY RESEARCH INSTITUTE CONFERENCE TO TAKE PLACE IN MALTA IN JUNE 2017



Following two highly successful conferences in Barcelona and Rome, the Homeopathy Research Institute will host their third conference in the Mediterranean island of Malta.

HRI conferences, organised every two years, are dedicated to homeopathic research, gathering international experts in all fields related to Homeopathy, to provide a platform for the sharing and exchange of inspirational findings and ideas.

Some key speakers have already been announced, such as Professor Michael Frass, Dr Stephan Baumgartner, Professor Harald Walach and Dr Emma Macias-Cortes. The abstract submission process will run until 5 December 2016. The topics covered will include the following:

- Clinical research (quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods)
- Disease prevention
- Fundamental research
- Laboratory-based research
- Pathogenetic trials
- Veterinary research

As per previous conferences, ECH is associated with the event, and President Thomas Peinbauer makes up part of the Advisory Committee.

For more information: [www.hrimalta2017.org/](http://www.hrimalta2017.org/)

## MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR DIARIES



- 17–19 November 2016: ECH European congress in Vienna [www.homeopathycongress.eu/2016/index.php](http://www.homeopathycongress.eu/2016/index.php)
- 20 November: ECH General Assembly in Vienna <http://homeopathyeurope.org/event/10th-ech-general-assembly/>
- 21–22 April 2017: ECH spring meeting
- 9–11 June 2017: 3rd HRI Conference in Malta [www.hrimalta2017.org/](http://www.hrimalta2017.org/)
- 14–17 June 2017: 72nd LMHI congress in Leipzig [www.lmhi-congress-2017.de/\(info@homeopathyeurope.org\)](http://www.lmhi-congress-2017.de/(info@homeopathyeurope.org)).

### IMPRINT

ECH INTERNAL NEWS ■ September 2016 ■ Pictures: Archives ■ Editor: Hélène Renoux ■ Editorial Support: Chris Connolly ■ ECH Administrative Office: Noorwegenstraat 499940 Evergem (Ghent) ■ Phone +32 9 218 85 85 ■ Fax: +32 9 344 40 10 ■ Email: [info@homeopathyeurope.org](mailto:info@homeopathyeurope.org) ■ Internet: [www.homeopathyeurope.org](http://www.homeopathyeurope.org)