European Committee for Homeopathy

ECH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Hotel Bloom
250, Rue Royale, Brussels, Belgium

17/18th NOVEMBER 2012
MINUTES

Saturday, 17th of November

Morning meeting

Short presentations on the achievements and current actions of the ECH

Dr Ton Nicolai opened the 8thGA.
It was asked to co-ordinators to present what ECH has achieved the last 2 years.

*Subcommittee documentation
Mrs Caroline Vandeschoor:
The Doc SC had two meetings since the last GA:

- In May 2011 in Utrecht, at the University Library (host: Rienk Stuut)
- In February 2012 in Karlsruhe, at the DHU (host: Susanne Rehm)

What have we been doing the last two years?

Update of the running projects:

- Homeopathic thesaurus
- Joint dissertation list
- Journals database

Currently we are looking at the technical implications of putting these databases onto the ECH website.

Update of the International Guide on Homeopathic Documentation Resources (IGHDR). Database was started in 1995 and last updated in 2006. The last months we have been contacting the people in the Guide with the request to update their data. The response is still rather poor for the moment (about 1/5), but all new information is already incorporated in the website. (http://www.homeopathyeurope.org/publications/documentation-resources)

We kindly request all ECH people to have a look at the IGHDR on the website and contact any people they know who have not updated their data (data of last update is visible for everyone) and ask them to get in touch with us. Secondly, if anyone knows of a homeopathic collection (also small and/or non-European ones), please get in touch with us.

Complete revision of the list of links on the ECH website. Huge work of which the preparatory work has been done. Aim is to continue the revision work during this weekend (and the coming months) and publish the results on the ECH website as soon as the work is finished.

*Subcommittee education

Dr Yves Maillé: Harmonization between ECH and LMHI educational guidelines has led to an increase of the requested hours to validate the homeopathic training. The way to organize the transition and to qualify these extra hours is on the go.

*Subcommittee patients/users

Mrs Enid Segall: Our main action has been the involvement in the Eurocam meeting in October in Brussels.
We continue to work towards seeing a patient group being formed in each of the 27 member states. The three MEPs who sponsored the Eurocam meeting come from countries which currently do not have a patients' group, namely Romania, Slovenia and Finland. We will prioritise action in these countries.
We have a new member, a second group from Greece – EGO
Our new secretary, Sato Liu, whom you have met when she stood in for me at the Madrid meeting, has settled well into the job of secretary. She is willing to take over from me as co-ordinator if we are allowed to remain part of the ECH.

*Subcommittee pharmacy

Dr Gema Pons:
The subcommittee has been and will continue working about four essential issues for the Pharmacy subcommittee which are:

1-Availability of the remedies, it is a well-known problem due to their singular characteristics and linked to legislative obstacles. The Remedy Bank project has a proposal to finish with this problem but needs the support of all, pharmacists, industry and doctors.
2-Legislation, the availability is most of the times linked to European legislation, different in all the member states, until the harmonization that is about to happen, our subcommittee has collaborated with the Research subcommittee in order to offer support to the HMPWG of the European Agency to make more easy their work and offer experts assessment.
3-Quality of the remedies was discussed many times in the subcommittee and it is determined that it is necessary to make some protocols of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)
4-Education for pharmacists, in clinical and technical aspects of the homeopathic remedies

The last years the Pharmacy subcommittee had a problem of assistance by the members what made more difficult to create an effective working group due to the amount of work and the small working group. After the questionnaire required by all the members of the subcommittee last year and the letter of interest of the subcommittee now I am glad that new members of the subcommittee have attended the meeting and there are some members willing to collaborate in the ECH affairs. The motivation of the new members will make the subcommittee move forward for sure and these are good news!

*Subcommittee politics

Dr Robert Ködel :

National reports of present representants were discussed. There were two candidates as new coordinator of political sc. In a ballot Hetty Buitelaar was elected as candidate.

Thomas Peinbauer showed his ideas as candidate for presidency in a powerpoint presentation. CEN again was in discussion and found majority pro project among participants of ECH sc pol.

Virtual conference via ECH homepage was installed for those who cannot be present from different reasons. Discussions about different points were set into closed internet side, so that there could be some comment from outside.

Ton's paper about healthy future of ECH and LMHI was again discussed. Vast majority was in favor of moving secretariat to Berlin (after hot discussions in ECH meeting in Madrid).

*Subcommittee provings

Dr Jean Pierre Jansen:

- Database: Technical difficulties because many hundreds of provings are reviewed
The main conclusion is that many data must be existing but are not reported.
- Homeopathic Medicines List: SC Provings wishes to stick to the lowest possible requirements, as allowed by EU Directive.
Debate within ECH was energy and time consuming, halted work of SC Provings
Outcome is not yet reported
- Education: Implement self-experience with remedies. Teach homeopathic philosophy and skills
Avoid legal hurdles. Last Friday, ± 20 schools represented
- CliFiCol: Hopes in 2008 for an infrastructure to develop clinical verification of provings and advertising for homeopathy. Cooperation within ECH needs to stimulated
- Standard proving format
Would enable ethical board to work more efficiently and less expensive
Standard development within CEN framework will be considered

*Subcommittee research

Dr Michel Van Wassenhoven :

A/ After each LMHI congress, we published an update of the LMHI – ECH document: “Scientific Framework of Homeopathy”. This booklet aiming at a better access to scientific publications including provings and clinical cases is updated each year with new results of homeopathic research. The 2012 version (based on 2011 data before the last LMHI congress) is on the LMHI website and can be downloaded freely. A convergent amount of data is justifying at least more scientific research. This public booklet is aimed to be used in each country of the world to justify homeopathy in the frame of medical science. It contains not only recent LMHI congress publications; all relevant scientific publications on Homeopathy published during the year in several journals are also included. If you are aware of a new valuable scientific publication on homeopathy, do not hesitate to mail it to me, it will be incorporated in a following update of the booklet. I will stay in charge of the update of this booklet until the 2013 (and 2014), my mandate for the LMHI will end only in 2013.

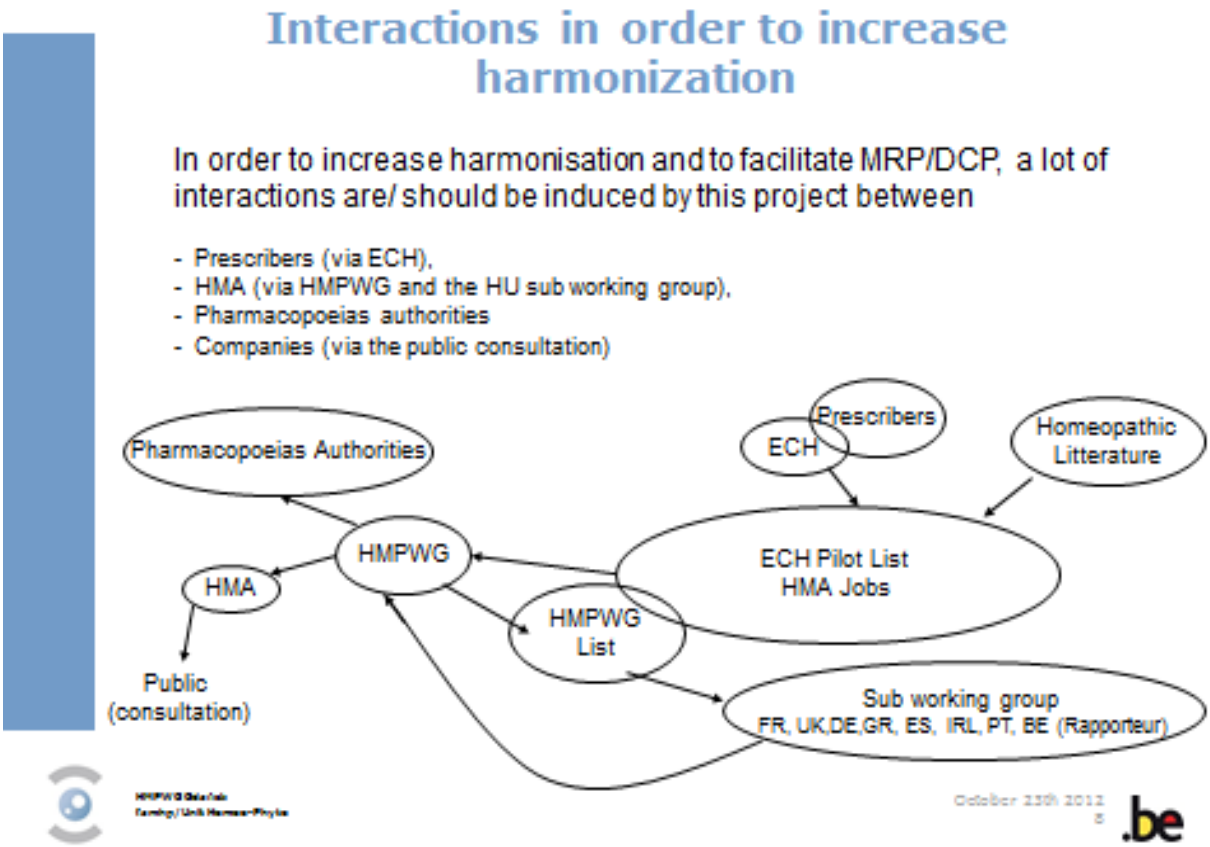
B/ The ECH Research Strategy document 2012 has been updated with all received comments, Galen Ives has reviewed it for correct English after inclusion of Robbert Van Haselen comments. This document will be proposed for acceptance to the ECH GA.

C/ There is an approved by the International Council LMHI definition of the homeopathic remedy on the LMHI website. It would be used also for ECH definition where needed as for political purpose in Europe (see Belgian official definition of homeopathy and homeopathic definition).

D/ LMHI guidelines for clinical verification of homeopathic symptoms have been discussed again within the ECH and LMHI research working group and we could reach a consensus on a second edition draft document that is accepted by the LMHI GA. This document is also presented to the ECH GA for acceptance. About international proving guidelines, within the LMHI, a special WG has been generated to prepare a second version of the guidelines. Contact person will be Ashley Ross (South-Africa / Durbin).

E/ Elaboration of a list of documented homeopathic medicines allowing automatic registration following the simplified procedure without indications harmonized by the Homeopathic Medicinal Products Working Group (HMPWG) in name of the Head of Medicine Agencies (HMA). Remember that in 2010 ECH presented to the HMPWG a list of about 3000 documented medicines for homeopathic use. The aim of this procedure is to come to a Mutual Recognition Procedure (MRP) of each homeopathic medicine in all European countries. Remember also that after Brussels meeting in February between the HMPWG Homeopathic use WG and ECH coordinators it was decided that ECH would prepare a very short sample list of well documented homeopathic remedies (adding some remedies were ECH found some problems) aimed at a presentation to the HMPWG in May 2012. This short list has been prepared by a WG under supervision of Ton Nicolai. The HMPWG has considered this work positively and has established a WG on homeopathic use in charge to work further on a HMPWG list of homeopathic medicines for which there is no doubt on the nature of the stock and on corresponding documented homeopathic use. Medicines that would not be listed are not excluded for the registration process but will have to follow a complete national registration procedure.

This is a possible scheme of interactions proposed by the WG homeopathic use of the HMPWG needed to increase European harmonization of the registration procedures:



This work is going on; step by step parts of the HMPWG list could be submitted to public consultation. The role of ECH could be to help for homeopathic medicines insufficiently documented and for the correct and detailed description of the corresponding stock. If problems would arise on the nature of the stock it is not excluded that European homeopathic pharmacopoeias could be improved. I hope that ECH will accept to go on with a participation in this project for the future.

F/ ECH involvement into Research projects. The clinical data collection "Cli-Fi-Col" is now incorporated into the Radar Opus system allowing all users of this databank to collect all their clinical cases. The automatic calculation of L.R. for each prescribed remedy in his own practice will be a new tool allowing first personal improvement and later on to publish a lot about clinical verification of homeopathic symptoms in daily practice, for further contacts please see Dr Carlo Rezzani, he is working on this project.

A Spanish team from Barcelona is preparing a reproduction of already published trials on homeopathy allowing on a later stage to perform an audit of these publications. A contact with previous research teams has been established. Also for Spain, the document published (ECH-LMHI) after the negative KCE report in Belgium is now in Spanish translation and adaptation to react to a similar attack against homeopathy in Spain.

The ISCHI research committee is working on a new audit of the homeopathic literature respecting the homeopathic laws before statistical rules were accepted for publication (*BMC Medical Research Methodology*

2012, 12:49 doi:10.1186/1471-2288-12-49). Titel: "Method for appraising model validity of randomised controlled trials of homeopathic treatment: multi-rater concordance study". It was presented at the last GIRI meeting in Florence a few weeks ago. A paper, initiated by Lex Ruten, on the plausibility of homeopathy and influence of prior beliefs on audit of literature has been also accepted for publication in another international journal.

The idea to link research results of Prof. Dimpfel (Germany) and Iris Bell (USA) about animal ECG changes using homeopathic CNS remedies and about ECG changes during provings in human has been considered. Coffea cruda was used by both authors, in the animal research in 4D, for proving in 30C. Using higher dilution in animal research would be considered. This project is still on standby.

The international survey (7 countries) funded by Euro-Consumer's has been closed on 30 of March2012. More than 1600 new adults were included as around 700 new children (between 1 and 6 years old). This is an important success even if temperate by a lot of loss of follow-up, results of change in Quality of Life after 6 months for adults and 2 months for children will be discussed at a meeting in Milano on 22th of May 2012, publication is still expected for the end of 2012. The participating patients in this survey were very satisfied with the treatment. More statistical analyse of the data has been requested before publication.

From a short survey asked by the LMHI congress organizers in Japan, it seems that only a third of the distributed homeopathic remedies are above the Avogadro number. We are convince that the dynamisation process for homeopathic medicines does not allow the application of the Avogadro law. Nevertheless the argument of "there is nothing in it anymore" can be rejected very easily only when we know that 50% of the used homeopathic medicines are not diluted above 5CH.

G/ The question of training for homeopathic researchers is still pending but it cannot be a common goal because the research sub-committee is composed by so much different research areas and so many different competences (basic research/ different kind of clinical research/ hospital research/ etc. –see research strategy document). There is training possible on QoL surveys in Berlin (Prof. Claudia Witt) but the aim of this sub-committee is mainly to link together researchers with a same field interest allowing mutual exchange of expertise (see example of Spain).

H/ Funding research could be pushed forward in a near future.

I/ The nomination and election of a new ECH co-ordinator is on the agenda of the GA, Dr Günter Lang representing both Switzerland and Germany presented his candidature. He can show experience into homeopathic research and daily practice without any conflict of interest.

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.
c) ISCHI and GIRI meetings.

d) New secretary for research for follow-up of all these topics.

Dr Ton Nicolai presented a power point on the Eurocam congress he attended last month with Thomas Peinbauer in Brussels, and on the "International Homeopathy day" in Turkey in April.

Dr Thomas Peinbauer presented a power point on "European Standard for Service Provisions of Medical Doctors with additional Qualification in Homeopathy" aiming to enhance the process of standardization provided through the CEN, the European Committee for Standardization (Comité Européen de Normalisation, Europäisches Komitee für Normung), which is an international non-profit organization set up under Belgian law. Through its services, it provides a platform for the development of European Standards (ENs) and other consensus documents. Thomas Peinbauer has made a budget, for the participation of representatives of ECH in this process, which has been submitted to the GA.

It has been decided that the secretariat of the ECH would move to Berlin next year, in order to save some costs by using the LMHI pre-existing structure there.

Dr Yves Maillé stressed the importance to think of protecting the European identity of the ECH beside the international LMHI.

Afternoon meeting

-Financial report and budget

Dr Yves Faingnaert, ECH Treasurer presented his accounts
*Balance 2010-2011
2010: income, € 150.517,37 expenditures, € 121.861,15 result = +28656
2011: income, € 148.593,86 expenditures, € 158.484,66 result = - 9881

balance = 18775

*Financial status 2012
Income: € 149.437,24

Expenditures: € 77.069,79

Provisional result: €72367 (more expenditure to come until the end of the year)

*Budget 2013/2014
Income estimated to € 147.300,00 in 2013 and € 154.000,00 in 2014

Expenditures: € 7.696,00 in 2013 and € 3.396,00 in 2014

Result = + 7696 in 2013 and 3396 in 2014

Financial report and budget are approved by the GA

The council proposes:
The control of the expenses and adapted membership fees for 2013 and 2014

VOTE was positive

A point of discussion that was initially planned for the council meeting arose: does ECH intend to go on paying both the membership fee for EFHPA (European Federation of Homeopathic Patients' Associations) and the reimbursement of the patients' coordinator? The ECH officers suggested to the Council to cease funding the patient/users group, due to the fact that the subcommittee patients is functioning, as EFHPA, practically independently from ECH. Before a discussion inside the Council could take place, this was challenged in the GA and a number of people spoke in support of the patient group.

After a short discussion in the GA a vote was taken there and then during the meeting it was decided that the patient group would remain and be funded by the ECH.

Elections of Council members
- Sub-committees co-ordinators:
Documentation: Caroline Vandeschoor
Education :Leopold Drexler
Patients/Users: Sato Liu
Pharmacy : Fruzsina Gabor
Politics: Hetty Buitelaar
Provings: Jean-Pierre Jansen
Research: Günter lang
Are elected
- **Officers:**
Treasurer: Dr Yves Faingnaert
General Secretary : Hélène Renoux
Vice-president : Karin Bandelin
President: Thomas Peinbauer
Are elected as Council members.

Thanks were made to Yves Maillé, Enid Segall, Gema Pons, Robert Ködel, Michel Van Wassenhoven, Ulrich Fischer and Ton Nicolai who were thanked for their hard work and dedication to ECH.
Special thank was made to the secretary Myriam Braillard who retires at the end of the year.

Sunday, 18th of November

General Assembly
Priority plans for the 2 coming years.

*Documentation sub-committee
Mrs Caroline Vandeschoor:
Priorities of the Documentation subcommittee
- Our main priority is to get the available information know to the homeopathic community.
- One of our concerns is to get more people interested in joining our working group.
- In the near future we will be updating the ongoing projects and continue our work on the IGHDR and the website links list.

Our subcommittee meets once a year. Our next meeting will be in Autumn 2013, date and location still need to be fixed. Anyone interested in joining the group and our work is very much invited.

*Education sub-committee

Dr Leopold Drexler: considering the development of the E-learning in Homeopathy we should need a wise sight of young homeopaths.

The accreditations of European homeopathic schools has to be reorganized according to the evolution of the rules decided jointly with LMHI

*Patients sub-committee

Mrs Sato Liu :

We have been discussing where patient involvement could be of support to other sub committees and identified four specific areas where we feel this may be useful:

- Documentation – information provision
- Education – quality of care and quality of treatment
- Pharmacy – product quality and availability

And, finally, but most importantly,

- Political – as this covers many areas, including availability, quality, access and equity

If the coordinators of these committees feel we can support their aims, we, the patient-users, would like to help you achieve them.

*Politic sub-committee

Dr Hetty Buitelaar: . Politics for the future, or to invite to the meeting:

- CAMDOC alliance member(s) to bring ideas to subcommittee
- chiropractic organisation about CEN experience
- experienced homeopathic countries should make partnership with "small" homeopathic countries, help building up structure in these countries
- invite a lobbyist to share ideas on 'How to get into contact with your national government and politicians' .
- have a shared meeting with subcmtee pharmacy about thrustworthy pharmacies in Europe, who can provide remedies, that are not available in some other countries.
- Shared meeting with subcmtee patients 'On which topics cab patients help?'

*Pharmacy sub-committee

Dr Fruzsina Gabor: Important to explain, that there is no homeopathy without good homeopathic remedies and educated pharmacists! The subcommittee has the plan in the next two years to work on the:

- Pharmaceutical quality of homeopathic medicines (nomenclature of homeopathic medicines, review of definitions in officially (ECH, WHO) published papers from pharmaceutical aspects, availability and registration of homeopathic remedies, Remedy Bank Project);
- Political aspects (consult with authorities, consult with other subcommittees, collect details, data according to pharmacists and homeopathic remedies and share the information, keep in touch with ECHAMP);

- Education of pharmacists in homeopathy (work on the educational standards at - different levels of education, collect dissertation fields and experts; be part of European credits transfer system credit point)

EDUCATIONAL STANDARD FOR HOMEOPATHIC PHARMACISTS

According the different rules, laws of the countries, the standards should cover the different levels of knowledge and education.

Basic level A:–Introduction to homeopathy
Basic level B: – Introduction to laboratory and pharmacy safety and cleanliness
Intermediate level C: – Homeopathic diploma for pharmacists
Advanced level D:–Higher knowledge of preparation of homeopathic remedies
Advanced level E:–Higher knowledge of homeopathic clinical practice

Please help us and send me the actual education standard, curriculum, any kind of documentation according to the education of homeopathy for pharmacists in your country!
E-mail: homeopatia.blogspot@gmail.com

COLLECT DETAILS, DATA
According to pharmacists and homeopathic remedies and share the information – survey!
http://homeonet.blogspot.hu/2012_06_01_archive.html

Please: answer the questionnaire!

REMEDY BANK PROJECT:
- A source for certified and documented raw and starting substances for homeopathic dilution (HSS).
- REMEDY BANK is a cooperative company. This means that the capital will be raised by a multitude of individual partners from all over the world.
- The cooperation is controlled by a board of pharmacists, making sure that the pharmaceutical quality is guaranteed by all means and as far as actual scientific knowledge permits.
- Dominance is excluded by limiting the number of shares per partner to 10 shares.
- A share values 2500 Euro. For legal bodies there is a minimum of 3 shares.
- Shares can be traded after 3 years according to the incorporation rules.

*Proving sub-committee
Dr Jean Pierre Jansen: the groundwork is ready regarding the guidelines to submit to CEN
Need to exchange with the sub-com' research about – EU directive of registration of trial – Clificol project – collaboration with HMPWG – Placebo as an example of mutual interest.

Need for a better communication about our skills, works and interests

Follow-up of our training on educational self-experimentations

*Research sub-committee

Dr Günter Lang: supervision of the listing of well-experimented remedies provided to the HMPWG

to get organized regarding the new directive of registration of any trials

And anyhow to accompany and to stay aware of all that is happening in the homeopathic world regarding researches, improvement as well as criticisms

Dr Hélène Renoux - Secretary