

Homeopathy: Healthy Medicine or Heresy?

by

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June 2008

Overview

Homeopathy is:

- individualised
- patient centred
- Safe and non invasive
- effective
- low cost
- based upon clear, easily comprehensible principles

Detractors claim homeopathy is:

- dangerous
- no better than placebo
- unscientific
- not evidence based
- a waste of money
- witchcraft/mumbo jumbo

Healthcare delivery in UK:

- provided by NHS for over 50 years
- free at point of delivery
- currently costs nation £100 billion/year - £1,650 per person
- costs escalating – anti biotic resistant 'superbugs' etc
- treatment strategy largely based upon categorising conditions, ie naming diseases

Healthcare delivery in UK:

- poorly personalised, very little time available to identify full extent of patient's needs
- unsatisfactory waiting times which can compromise patient's long term prognosis

Problems facing healthcare delivery in UK:

- patient offered limited treatment options
- lack of resources
- lack of funding
- unrealistic targets set by DoH
- escalating costs of malpractice claims
- increasingly drug dependant culture

Comment:

We have created a **National Sicknes Industry**, which is unable to deliver a consistently high standard of healthcare across the spectrum. This industry is structured to react to illness, **not** to deal with the causes of illness. We need to adopt a collaborative approach to healthcare delivery, and we need to use all the tools available, **including** homeopathy

Malaria:

- 4 types of malaria parasite, commonest being *Plasmodium falciparum*
- transmitted by female anopheline mosquito
- estimated 500 million cases annually
- about 1.5 million deaths, over half children under 5
- parasite becoming increasingly resistance to drugs
- drugs becoming more powerful, with more serious side effects

Life in malaria infested areas:

- majority of indigenous population cannot afford anti malarial drugs
- homeopathy has proved highly effective
- homeopathy can act as a prophylaxis
- homeopathy can treat people with malaria

Further information:

1. Lessell, C (1993), *The World Travellers Manual*, Saffron Walden, CW Daniel
2. Partington, T (2006), *Silent and Deadly, prophylaxis and treatment of malaria*, Homeopathy in Practice, Spring 2006, Alliance of Registered Homeopaths.

Available as free download from:

www.a-r-h.org/Publications/Journal/

'Newsnight' and malaria:

- 'undercover'
- specific question
- answers edited to present the reporters particular perspective
- no exploration of facts relating to prophylaxis and treatment of malaria in indigenous population
- interview skewed to suit personal agenda of reporter

Attacks on homeopathy:

- Started after Shang et al meta analysis published in Lancet August 2005
- meta analysis fails to meet generally accepted QUOROM standards (Lancet 1999)
- 110 placebo controlled trials of homeopathy reduced to just 8
- no idea which trails were final 8, no references given
- deny patients the right of choice

Controlled Clinical Trials (CCT's):

- based on assumption that a given disease will display the same characteristic symptoms in different individuals, so can therefore be treated in the same way
- cannot predict how a given patient will react to a given drug at a given time
- one size fits all approach
- can be manipulated to present a particular result
- provide the so called 'evidence base' upon which the multi million dollar drug industry depends

Homeopathy:

- prescription based on totality of symptoms as experienced by patient
- a number of remedies might be considered for one condition, each would have a very specific indication
- non toxic, non addictive, non invasive
- evidence base largely empirical, relying on doctors assessment of patients progress, and patients own experience of improved wellbeing
- tens of thousands of medical practitioners and half a billion patients use homeopathy annually

In conclusion:

- many conventional interventions save lives, and improve patient wellbeing, however, there are conditions which conventional medicine has little to offer
- homeopathy focuses on both the causes and the consequences of a patient's disorder, and provides them with the means to facilitate their own healing
- homeopathy has proved effective in treating a range of diseases, including disorders resulting from adverse reactions following conventional interventions

- there is an extensive amount of clinical and empirical evidence to support the efficacy of homeopathy
- numerous positive patient testimonials cannot be ignored because of the vested interests of a vociferous few, who present a selective interpretation of science to suit their own agenda
- choice within healthcare is a fundamental societal right