

POSITIVE RESEARCH TRIALS – HOMEOPATHY FOR CHILDREN

de Lange de Klerk E Blommers J Kuik DJ et al Effect of Homoeopathic Medicines on Daily Burden of Symptoms in Children with Recurrent Upper Respiratory Tract Infections *British Medical Journal*, November 19, 1994, 309:1329-32 A randomized double-blind, placebo controlled trial of 175 children. Results: **Homoeopathically treated group had 16% better symptom score** than placebo group.

Cornu C Poitevin B Lion L Gillet J Collet JP Poncet JE Chauferin G Boissel JP [Controlled clinical trial and homeopathic treatment of ORL and recurrent respiratory tract infections in children: preliminary survey of homeopathic physicians] [Article in French] *Therapie* 1995 Jan-Feb 50(1):41-5 Harrison

Friese K.H Kruse S Ludtke R Moeller H The Homoeopathic Treatment of Otitis Media in Children *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics*, 35, 7, 1997, 96-301. Randomized trial of 131 children with otitis media were treated with homoeopathic medication or conventional medication. Results: Duration of pain 2 days for homoeopathically treated group; 3 days for conventionally treated group. **70.7% of the homoeopathically treated children were free of recurrences** within the first year of treatment and 29% had a maximum of 3 recurrences. **Conventionally treated patients had 56.5% free of recurrences** within the first year of treatment and 43.5% had a maximum of 6 recurrences.

J. Lamont, **Homeopathic Treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: A Controlled Study** *British Homoeopathic Journal*, October, 1997, 86:196-200.

Forty-three children were randomly assigned to either placebo or homeopathic treatment groups, and then those initially given a placebo were given an individualized homeopathic medicine. All subjects underwent a homeopathic interview to determine which individualized remedy was appropriate. Results show significant improvement once the patient began taking the homeopathic medicine.

H Fixen A Vickers A A randomized comparison of homoeopathic and standard care for the treatment of glue ear in children. *Complement Ther Med*. 1999 Sep 7(3):132-5.

Jacobs J Jimenez M Malthouse S Chapman E Crothers D Masuk M Jonas WB Acute Childhood Diarrhoea- A Replication, *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 6, 2000, 131-139. Placebo controlled, randomized trial of 116 Nepalese children suffering from diarrhea. Replication of 1994 Nicaragua trial. Results: Treatment by **homoeopathy showed a significant improvement in comparison to placebo.**

Jacobs J Springer DA Crothers D Homeopathic treatment of acute otitis media in children: a preliminary randomized placebo-controlled trial. *Pediatr Infect Dis J*. 2001 Feb 20(2):177-83.

Jacobs J WB Jonas M Jimenez-Perez D Crothers Homeopathy for Childhood Diarrhea: Combined Results and Metaanalysis from Three Randomized, Controlled Clinical Trials, *Pediatr Infect Dis J*, 2003;22:229-34. A metaanalysis of 242 children treated for acute diarrhea. Results: highly significant in the duration of childhood diarrhea (P=0.008).

Examining the relative number of papers published for each of the three categories or classes of evidence, the present weight of evidence favours homeopathic treatment effectiveness in eight conditions: * childhood diarrhoea; * fibrositis (fibromyalgia); * hayfever/allergic rhinitis; * influenza; * pain (of various origins); * side-effects of radio-/chemotherapy; * sprains; * upper respiratory tract infection. Robert Matthie, Faculty of Homeopathy, 2003

Society of Homeopaths National Service Evaluation

Rationale:

The Homeopathic profession is faced with increasing calls for a greater evidence base for the service they offer. Traditional placebo controlled randomised trials have been shown to be unsuitable to assess holistic individualised treatments involving the interaction of many components (Weatherley-Jones 2004). As a profession we need to find ways of assessing practice that are sympathetic to and reflective of the way homeopaths work, however in a community predominantly made up of individual practitioners working in private practice there is very little existing research into homeopathy as practised by the majority of practitioners and experienced by their patients. The first phase of the National Service Evaluation was an uncontrolled prospective study designed to be exploratory and descriptive, gathering information about current practice.

Aims:

To gather basic data about the types of conditions & symptoms for which patients are seeking homeopathic treatment and patients' perceptions of the benefits received from treatment.

The setting:

Phase 1 ran from Dec 2003 to Dec 2005. Data was received from 37 members of the Society of Homeopaths working in a variety of settings including individual private practice, NHS clinics, low-cost clinics, teaching clinics. Recruitment was continuous by means of publicity in the SoH Newsletter, CPD events, AGM and annual conference.

Method:

Homeopaths collected information from patients from the first appointment using the patient-generated outcome measure MYMOP2 (Measure Yourself Medical Outcome Profile Paterson 1996) and an additional form designed to collect data about homeopaths' perceptions of the case and their prescriptions. Patients chose up to 2 symptoms that they considered most troublesome and an activity that was limited by their symptoms. These were graded on a 7-point Likert scale (see below), as was the patient's assessment of their general wellbeing. MYMOP2 also gathered information about the duration of symptoms and medication status.

MYMOP2 scale

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
	As good as it						As bad as
it	could be						could be

An additional form was designed using the same scale to collect the homeopath's perspective of symptoms central to case and details of the homeopathic prescription.

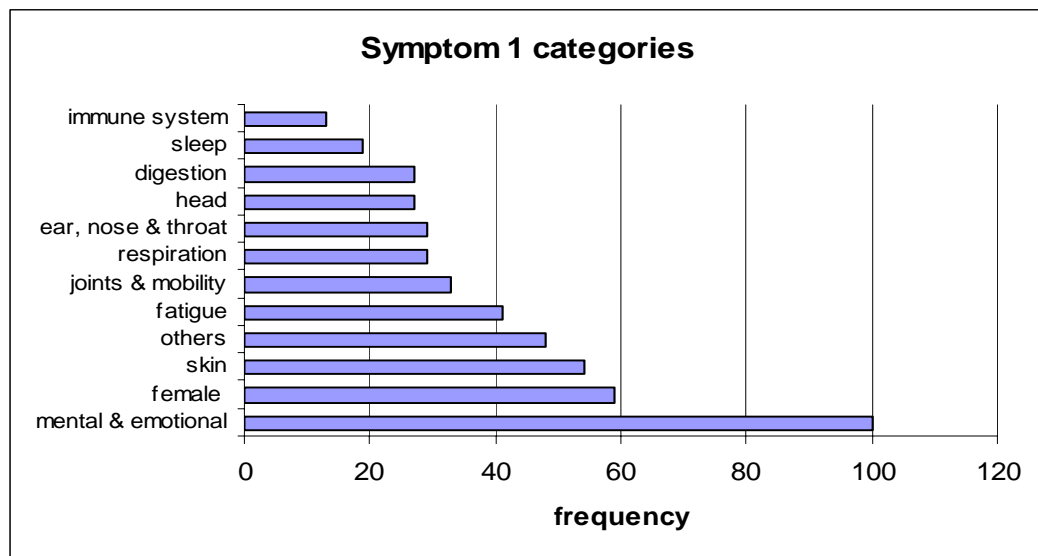
Data analysis:

Data was recorded and analysed using SPSS and Excel, the symptom categories were manually coded.

Results:

- 482 patients, 1419 consultations, there was a range of 1-16 consultations per patient.
- Follow up data was available for 86% of patients
- 79% of patients were female, 21% were male
- 44% of patients were between 40 – 59 years old

Symptom categories reported by patients:



Mental and emotional symptoms were the most frequently reported category of symptoms, for both symptom 1 and symptom 2. The top 4 complaints within this category were reported as anxiety, depression, instability/mood swings, and anger. The high incidence of female hormonal complaints is in part due to the participation of practitioners working at a menopausal clinic and a clinic for breast cancer sufferers. Infrequently reported symptoms included in the 'Others' category include urinary complaints, vertigo, heart & circulation, pain, fungal and parasitic complaints.

- 82.7% of patients reported a positive improvement in symptom 1
- 63.5% expressed an improvement of 2 points or above.
- 10.2% reported no change
- 7% reported a worsening of symptoms; no patients experienced a worsening above 3 MYMOP points

- Change in primary symptom – mean improvement of 2.26 (0.8 suggested to indicate clinically significant improvement Guyatt 1998). MYMOP Profile score change – mean improvement of 1.9

Evaluation of Phase 1

Phase 1 has generated a lot of valuable data about the conditions for which patients consult homeopaths and the benefit they receive from homeopathic treatment. Results show possible rich seams for future homeopathy research - e.g. mental & emotional pathology. A greater awareness of research and the concept of outcome measures are now evident amongst SoH members with increasingly frequent requests to the research team for information and advice.