

# Press Release

11 February 2010

**Event:** Lobby of Parliament and presentation of a 25,000-signature petition  
**Date:** Wednesday 24 February 2010  
**Organisers:** Homeopathy: Medicine for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (H:MC21)  
**Contacts:** William Alderson (Secretary): 01366 500799 *Email:* reply@hmc21.org  
Ursula Kraus-Harper (Chair): 01234 241133 *Email:* info@hmc21.org

## Homeopaths and Patients Lobby Parliament

On Wednesday 24 February homeopaths and patients from across the UK will be lobbying Parliament in support of homeopathy. They will also deliver to No. 10 Downing Street a letter and 25,000 signatures to the declaration: 'Homeopathy worked for me'. The event is organised by Homeopathy: Medicine for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (H:MC21) as part of its campaign to defend people's right to homeopathy, and particularly to homeopathy in the NHS.

The declaration is being handed in at this time because the Commons Science and Technology Committee is finalising a report on evidence for the use of homeopathy in the NHS. Campaigners are concerned about the nature of the evidence the committee has received, since three of the twelve people called to give oral evidence are neither experts in homeopathy, nor involved in the NHS. They are, however, well-known for campaigning against homeopathy.

H:MC21 has already published a report on the evidence and identified flaws in the critics' key claims. One of the three outspoken opponents of homeopathy, Ben Goldacre, told the committee that the best trials showed that homeopathy worked no better than placebo, whereas this is flatly contradicted by his own book (*Bad Science*). Similarly, Tracey Brown (of Sense About Science) claimed that the placebo effect is "powerful", whereas Prof. Edzard Ernst said it is "unreliable".

*William Alderson RSHom., a homeopath and Secretary of H:MC21 says:*

"There has been enormous publicity for a tiny number of people opposed to homeopathy, but the hundreds of thousands of ordinary people who use homeopathy not being heard. They are sick and tired of being told that they are liars, deluded or stupid because they have practical knowledge of the effectiveness of homeopathy. They are also sick and tired of the lies and misrepresentation used to try and prop up the attacks on homeopathy."

"H:MC21 has taken the trouble to study the arguments closely. Almost all of them appear in Edzard Ernst and Simon Singh's book *Trick or Treatment*, and we have identified 19 major errors in the approach of this book, apart from a multitude of factual errors. We have shown that it has "no validity as a scientific examination of alternative medicine", but is simply propaganda.

*Ursula Kraus-Harper PhD RSHom., Chair of H:MC21 and a homeopath, says:*

"There is a great deal of high-quality evidence that the potentised remedies used by homeopaths are biologically active. In fact the journal *Homeopathy* has just published a special issue detailing this research. Also, in a study of 6,544 patients at the Bristol Homeopathic Hospital, 70% showed improvement, indicating that homeopathy is highly effective in clinical practice."

"200 years of historical evidence of homeopathy's success in epidemics has also been confirmed recently. In Cuba the annual epidemics of leptospirosis had been getting worse, and were threatening to become uncontrollable. Cuba could not afford to vaccinate everybody, so they turned to the much cheaper alternative of homeopathy. Over 2 million people were given the homeopathic immunisation, and the infection rate plummeted by 80% in 2 weeks. The laboratory which used to produce the vaccine has stopped doing so and now produces only the homeopathic treatment."

So why are there claims that homeopathy does not work if 25,000 people, laboratory evidence and clinical evidence all show it does? William Alderson argues that it is because only one type of evidence is being used to support the claims. “Opponents of homeopathy claim to support evidence based medicine, and they focus entirely on randomised controlled trials (RCTs). These have produced ambiguous results, but when the designs of the trials are looked at more closely, it becomes clear that errors are often overlooked which can dramatically reduce the difference between the placebo and the treatment. In other words researchers using this approach need to take much more care to design appropriate trials.

“What makes this approach even more absurd is that fact that evidence based medicine specifically rejects relying on RCTs alone, since RCTs are unable to predict the effects of a treatment in an individual case. Instead the evidence has to be compared with other sources, such as studies of what happens in clinical practice. In fact it is the evidence from clinical practice which leads to drugs being withdrawn. So, if it is wrong to rely on RCTs in orthodox medicine, even if they produce clear results, it is ridiculous to rely on ambiguous RCTs as the sole source of evidence about homeopathy.”

The lobby is currently being supported by the following organisations:

- Allen College
- Alliance of Registered Homeopaths
- College of Practical Homeopathy
- Contemporary College of Homeopathy
- Helios Pharmacy
- Homeopathic College of East Anglia
- Homeopathy Heals
- Lakeland College
- School of Homeopathy
- Society of Homeopaths
- South Downs School of Homoeopathy
- South West London Homeopaths (Swelhoms)
- West London Homeopaths
- Yorkshire Centre of Classical Homeopathy

## Notes

### H:MC21

Homeopathy: Medicine for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a registered charity (1124711) established in 2007 to counter the unfounded propaganda against homeopathy by informing the public of the facts about homeopathy and its historical and scientific relationship to orthodox medicine. It does this through research, publication and campaigning.

For more information about the organisation or research, contact H:MC21 or visit its websites: [www.hmc21.org](http://www.hmc21.org) & [www.homeopathyworkedforme.org](http://www.homeopathyworkedforme.org)

### H:MC21 Publications:

#### *Halloween Science* (2009)

A detailed critique of Ernst and Singh's Trick or Treatment, showing that this is a wholly unscientific study of alternative medicine.

Available at: <http://www.hmc21.org/#/halloween-science/4535659799>

#### *Evidence to the Commons Science and Technology Committee* (2009)

A careful and fully referenced analysis of why the evidence based medicine model is inappropriate for assessing homeopathy.

#### *Report on Selected Evidence to the Commons Committee* (2009)

An analysis of the evidence given by Ben Goldacre, Edzard Ernst and Tracey Brown (of Sense About Science), revealing how they contradict each other on basic facts.

Both available at: <http://www.hmc21.org/#/cstc-submission/4537525955>

#### *Report of a Pilot Survey of Primary Care Trusts*

A survey of 26 PCTs to identify the level of provision of homeopathy and the level of training of those making decisions about this provision.

Available at: <http://www.hmc21.org/#/pct-survey/4535660289>

### **Bristol Homeopathic Hospital Study**

David S. Spence, Elizabeth A. Thompson and S.J. Barron, 'Homeopathic Treatment for Chronic Disease: A 6-Year, University-Hospital Outpatient Observational Study', *JACM*, 11 (2005), 793–798, available at <<http://dscience.net/spence-jacm-05.pdf>>.

See also the Northern Ireland Study: Donal McDade, *Evaluation: Complementary And Alternative Medicines Pilot Project* (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2008), available at <[http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/final\\_report\\_from\\_smr\\_on\\_the\\_cam\\_pilot\\_project\\_-\\_may\\_2008.pdf](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/final_report_from_smr_on_the_cam_pilot_project_-_may_2008.pdf)>.

### **Cuban Immunisation Project Report**

Dr Concepción Campa, Dr Luis E. Varela, Dr Esperanza Gilling, MCs Rolando Fernández, Tec. Bárbara Ordaz, Dr Gustavo Bracho, Dr Luis García, Dr Jorge Menéndez, Lic. Natalia Marzoa, and Dr Rubén Martínez, *Homeoprphylaxis: Cuban Experiences on Leptospirosis*, Nosodes 2008 Conference, p. 16, available at <<http://www.finlay.sld.cu/nosodes/en/ProgramaNOSODES2008Eng.pdf>>.

### **More Information on Homeopathy in Epidemics**

Bradford, Thomas Lindsley, *The Logic of Figures or Comparative Results of Homeopathic and Other Treatments*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn 1900, (Kessinger Publishing: [United States (?)], repr. edn [n.d.]

### **Homeopathy**

A two part special issue focusing on biological models of homeopathy: 'Biological models of homeopathy Part 1', *Homeopathy*, 98 (2009), 183-302; 'Biological models of homeopathy Part 2', *Homeopathy*, 99 (2010), 1-56, available at: <<http://www.elsevier.com/locate/homp>>