

# INTERNAL NEWS

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## OUR VERY BEST WISHES FOR 2017

By **Hélène Renoux**, ECH president

The start of this year, which coincides with the beginning of a new mandate for a new council is a fitting moment to wish you, and all of us, a fantastic 2017.

Thomas Peinbauer's presidency reached its conclusion at the end of 2016 with a very successful congress in Vienna – he left us a rich legacy and an array of promising ongoing projects.

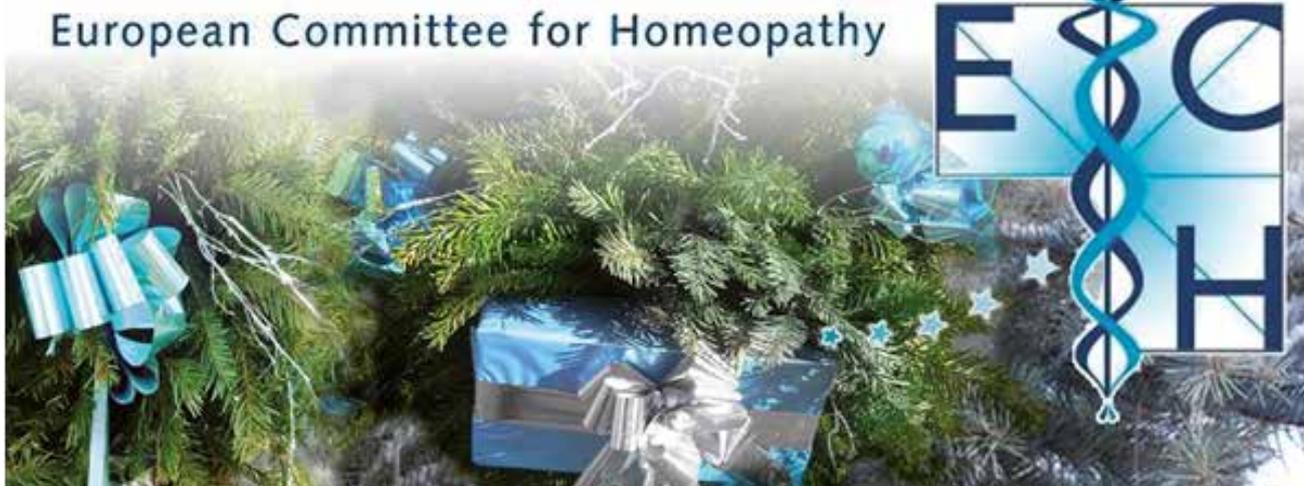
Medical Homeopathy faces a unique opportunity in today's climate, with changes in people's mentalities compounded by cur-

rent economic restrictions and ecological evolutions. This certainly explains why the sceptics are more aggressive than ever. It is vital that we use our energy, not only against our opponents, but mostly to emphasise the value of homeopathy to the wider public and the reliable alternative it offers.

This renewed presentation of our biannual newsletter will reflect the drive with which we want to approach our common work and projects: both looking to the future and addressing the outside world, while focusing on our common interest and passion for Homeopathy.

Let's make 2017, and all the years thereafter, the years of Homeopathy.

European Committee for Homeopathy



## INTERVIEW WITH HÉLÈNE RENOUX

By Tomasz Kokoszczyński



***You are living in Paris, aren't you? Do you feel that the city has any deeper influence on you?***

This is a good way to introduce myself isn't it? Like all of us many influences are underneath, I come from Brittany, the seashore, where I completed my medical studies in Nantes. I then moved

to Paris to study Tropical Diseases and Public Health before using this knowledge with Afghan refugees in Pakistan in 1988. Afterward I came back to Paris for personal reasons and to study Homeopathy. It was certainly my own path to access this awareness of how I could be helpful for my fellow human beings, and how I could give some meaning to my life.

### ***What is your goal of life?***

As medical doctors we are very lucky because we don't have to wonder if our work is helpful, people tell us it is every day. I think my main goal is to find some serenity, it comes through personal expression, discovering the others around me, being surrounded by some love and enjoying the beauty of my environment. It sounds so simple when it is not at all.

### ***What was your personal way to homeopathy? Any inspiration to choose this field?***

When finishing my medical studies I felt we were on the wrong way to address people and their sickness, as if we were trying to force opening doors instead of looking for the key. Homeopathy is a key.

### ***How could you describe the main idea of homeopathy if you would have to explain it to a layperson?***

After explaining the principle of similarity and the potentization

process, I would just remind the person that solutions are already available around us, in nature and that we shouldn't despise it.

### ***If you were a magician, what would you change in the world to make homeopathy more appreciated?***

We are on the way to be more and more appreciated, the public is in need of the relation to the environment Homeopathy proposes. The governments will follow, they usually follow the evolutions, and rarely precede it. If I was a magician I would make our decision makers wiser...

### ***Could you tell what you do to relax? Do you have any hobby?***

I like writing, in French, I like the French language and poetry, it certainly influences a lot my thoughts.

### ***Is there something more you would like to tell about yourself our readers?***

Don't forget that The European Committee for Homeopathy is a great achievement, both strong and fragile, we owe it to our predecessors I would like to thank, Jacques Imberecht who is the inventor, the father of all this, Ton Nicolai who gave ten years of his life to ECH, Thomas Peinbauer I had the pleasure to work with for four years as General Secretary, and Patricia Le Roux who was bound to be before her dramatic accident. We also owe it to our successors, they will need more and more such associations to express their ideas and needs. We are torchbearers.

### ***Well what do you intend to do now inside ECH?***

Actually even if I am French I don't plan the revolution! I would like to continue the successful projects ECH has initiated, make them go further and deeper for the sake of Homeopathy: enhancing the recognition of our practice as the European Standardisation process CEN has started to do, supporting the cases collections projects which are of great help to assess the efficiency and relevance of Homeopathy, and remaining watchful about homeopathic medicinal products availability. I would be proud to have laid my stone to the common edifice.

***Thank you for the interview.***

## FIRST EUROPEAN CONGRESS FOR HOMEOPATHY A HUGE SUCCESS

Around 500 people from 50 countries, including medical doctors, veterinarians, pharmacists, researchers, patients and policymakers attended the first European Congress for Homeopathy in Vienna from 17-19 November 2016.

The Congress highlighted the dramatic progress in basic and clinical homeopathic research and the important contribution of homeopathy to the health care systems of numerous countries. Important challenges such as availability of homeopathic remedies and restrictive changes in legislation were also identified.

The main topics presented and discussed were anti-microbial resistance, oncological treatments, Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) and homeopathy as nanomedicine.

The Congress was jointly organised by the European Committee for Homeopathy (ECH), the European Federation of Homeopathic Patients' Associations (EFHPA) and the International Association for Veterinary Homeopathy (IAVH).



*The audience of the Opening ceremony of the congress in Vienna.*

ECH members can login in the ECH website to gain access to the abstracts of the Congress.

**Dr Jaime Costa, ECH General Secretary**

## JAUME COSTA, ECH GENERAL SECRETARY – INTRODUCTION

By Tomasz Kokoszczynski



***What is actually your nationality? Where do you live now? I have heard you are active on homeopathy in Ireland, is that true?***

I was born in Barcelona, so I am Catalan, and my nationality is Spanish. I live in Trim, County Meath, in the Republic of Ireland. Other medical homeopaths, practising in the Republic of Ireland and registered with the Faculty of Homeopathy, and myself have set up a group that meets around four times a year to discuss cases, materia medica and homeopathic methodologies. I consider very important continuous professional development and peer support. A group is ideal for both.

***You are practicing homeopathy only, or working as a regular doctor? What is your specialty?***

I studied medicine in Barcelona and public health at the University of Texas. Most of my career has been in public health as European Union official. At present, I am registered with Barcelona Medical Council and I am in the Board of Barcelona Medical Council Homeopathic Doctors' Section. Once a month I go to Barcelona and I see patients, attend the meetings of my study group and the Academia Medico Homeopatica de Barcelona and visit my mother. I have also my homeopathic practice in Trim, Ireland.

***What was your way to homeopathy? What and who inspired you to be a homeopath? Why you are still in it?***

I got into homeopathy because a family member was diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis and had good results with homeopathic treatment. This prompted me to go to the Institute Homeopathique Francais in Paris to study – I was living in Luxembourg at the time. I was very privileged to meet excellent teachers such as Philippe Servais, Yves Maillé and Dominique Poulin. In Paris I met also Hélène Renoux, we were both members of the students' association of the homeopathic school. Later I had the opportunity to study at the

Royal London Hospital for Integrated Medicine, whose Director of Education was and is Sara Eames. There I was also very fortunate to have inspiring teachers such as Brian Kaplan and Russell Malcolm. Homeopathy is a win-win situation for both patient and physician. Patients, many times, can have the opportunity to recover full health or to become a healthy patient, this is to accept disease and its constraints in a positive way. Doctors using homeopathy can achieve much greater job satisfaction from seeing their patients become empowered and back to health.

***Tell us about your hobbies? What do you do in your free time? Do you have any free time at all?***

I enjoy hill walking and swimming very much. I practise yoga and meditation either in a group or in my own. I also like reading a good novel. Last but not least, I try to be available as much as possible for my two sons.

***You have very positive attitude toward life. There is a lot of positive energy talking to you. This is your nature, or you have done in your life something to be more positive?***

Life is a great teacher and so is homeopathy. Homeopathy teaches us to be humble, grateful and accepting. Humble because we never know enough. Grateful because homeopathy brings small miracles. Accepting because homeopathy helps us understand that most people do their best. Dr Malcolm told me once that the best quality in a homeopath is persistence. I completely agree with him not only in relation to homeopathy but also regarding life in general. On another note, Dr Servais said to the students in Paris that homeopathy helps people accept life as it comes. I feel this is a recipe for contentment and happiness.

***What is your main goal about homeopathy? What do you want to achieve for homeopathy? What main idea drives you and how homeopathy helps you to carry it out?***

Homeopathy should be part of the European health care systems. A strong coalition of patients, health professionals, industry, policy-makers and researchers is paramount to succeed in our endeavour. We have a great advantage: homeopathy empowers patients and is really a patient-centred medicine.

***Thank you for the interview.***

## MR. ALOJZ PETERLE (MEP) ADDRESSES THE ECH CONGRESS



The Slovenian member of the European Parliament, Mr Alojz Peterle, who was the first Prime Minister of his country in 1990, had initially accepted the invitation from ECH, IAVH and EFHPA to attend the political conference of the European congress in Vienna to show his support to Homeopathy.

Unfortunately other commitments prevented him from attending but he submitted an inspired and supportive address (see the video on ECH website) whose content is transcribed below.

This address is a strong statement that European citizens "increasingly recognise the benefits of Homeopathy" while Member States lack coherence in regulating it. He also states that homeopathy has an innovative place in healthcare with regards to cost efficiency and health inequalities.

All the participants of the congress, and the homeopathic community as a whole, are hugely grateful for this wise, enlightened and supportive declaration.

"Honourable speakers, doctors, practitioners, dear guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you very much for inviting me to the first European Homeopathy Congress, which aims to increase the recognition of homeopathy across the European Union and its Member States.

To me homeopathy stands for a holistic, complete, cost-effective and safe approach to promote health, prevent and treat disease. In particular, I am its strong supporter due to its patient-centeredness. We are obviously facing a growing number of health related challenges: an aging population, rising levels of diseases such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease, mental ill-health and antimicrobial re-

sistance. The situation begs the question as to whether there are better ways to approach healthcare for humans and animals alike. You have gathered here, because you know that the answer is positive. Yet you are not alone: European citizens increasingly recognise the benefits of a homeopathy and its inherent holistic approach to care.

Therefore, I regret, that there is still little coherence in the way Member States regulate medical doctors and other health professionals practicing homeopathy in the EU. Furthermore, member states' variable implementation of EU directives for homeopathic medicinal products is negatively affecting access by citizens and providers.

As Co-Chair of the Parliamentary Health Working group, I have been calling for homeopathy to be taken more determinedly by the Commission and Member states. Together with my colleagues from the Parliamentary Interest group on CAM we have been reiterating that Commission should take action to resolve the highly confused and inhibiting regulatory situation that currently exists. I

expect that the on-going legislative procedure for Veterinary Medicinal Products will integrate the spirit of the WHO traditional medicine strategy and respect homeopathic specific nature as well. My firm belief is that homeopathy can play an innovative role in the context of the enormous personal, social and economic cost of chronic disease and health inequalities.

For these reasons and given its widespread demand among European citizens, we need to incorporate ways in which homeopathy can contribute to sustainable healthcare systems in Europe including its role in health maintenance, reduction of use of antibiotics, less invasive and more cost-effective treatment of illness, which are also some of objectives of the EU Health Strategy 2014-2020. Finally, evidence for effectiveness and cost-saving and of good practice can be observed in different Member States, in particular by the pioneering health service in the Tuscany Region in Italy. The time is ripe to seriously consider homeopathy as both innovation and added value for European citizens.

Thank you for your attention and I wish you a successful session."

## PANEL DISCUSSION PHARMACY IN VIENNA

On 19 November, during the first ECH congress in Vienna, the ECH co-ordinator for Pharmacy, Ilse Muchitsch hosted a panel of important figures to discuss the future of homeopathic pharmacy.

The invitees were:

- Agnes M. Dadak, PhD, DVetPharm – Assistant Professor at the Division of Clinical Pharmacology, Veterinary University Vienna, Vienna, Austria
- Jack Hendrickx – pharmacist, Remedy Bank, Homeopathic Starting Materials, Belgium – Labotics Technology & Equipment, Hoboken, Belgium
- Dr. Ulrich Herzog – Ministry of Health and Women Head of the directorate "Consumer Health and Veterinary affairs"
- Dr. Reinhard Laenger – Head of Dept. for herbal, homeopathic & veterinary medicinal products – Austrian Medicines and Medical Devices Agency (AGES MEA), Vienna, Austria
- Christiaan Mol – pharmacist, is General Secretary of ECHAMP, member of the Committee on Manufacturing Methods of the German Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia.
- Martin Peithner – pharmacist, General Manager of Dr. Peithner KG, Vienna, Austria, – Member of PHARMIG, member of the herbal committee of AESGP, member of the national pharmacopoeia commission and from 2006–2011 he was on the expert group HOM of the European pharmacopoeia commission (EDQM).
- Dr. Robbert van Haselen – Director of the International Institute for Integrated Medicine (INTMEDI) and the World Integrated Medicine Forum (WIMForum), member of the Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Convention of the United States (HPCUS) since 2009.
- Michel van Wassenhoven, MD – Delegate for UNIO (Belgian Homeopaths MDs Association) for Research questions; initiator of DYNHOM research WG, President of the Belgian homeopathic medicine registration commission at the Belgian Medicine Agency (FAMHP), member of the WG homeopathic use of the HMPWG (HMA).

Dr Sara Eames, ECH vice-president, chaired the debate.



The purpose of the panel was to address specific issues associated with the availability of homeopathic medicines and regulatory affairs, as well as how to guarantee the best quality and the availability of homeopathic medical products in future with members of Pharmacy, Industry, Authorities, Politics, Universities and Research.

In summarising the main points addressed during the discussion, the most prominent themes were:

### 1. **More dialogue needed**

The only dialogue taking place currently is between industry and regulators; patients, prescribers and individual pharmacists are not involved. Even the dialogue between industry and regulators is considered insufficient.

### 2. **Lack of relevant quality standards**

We lack studies assessing the safety and efficacy of the homeopathic medicinal products (HMPs). We have no standards to assess innovative substances or new manufacturing processes. The available standards do not comply with individualised homeopathy, and the definitions of quality for HMPs are based on the pharmaceutical ingredients but don't take into account the succussion process.

### 3. **How to deal with new remedies, innovative manufacturing**

There should be tolerance towards new HMPs in order to give them the opportunity to demonstrate their effectiveness. For this reason the harmonisation of Common Technical Documents (CTDs) among

the different European countries is a necessity. The guidelines used by the Homeopathic Medicinal Products Working Group (HMPWG) always state "when available" for required controls, which is intended to leave the door open to new HMPs.

There are two "legs" in preparation of homeopathic remedies, which have to be considered: the pharmaceutical preparation in pharmacy and the industrial production. Each of them has presents different challenges and should be considered in different ways. Both are necessary and should be seen as complementary to the other! The importance of "magistral preparation of homeopathic remedies" in pharmacies was pointed out as a pressing requirement to guarantee the availability of remedies in Europe.

As for pharmacists, it is a medical scientific fact that evidence based homeopathic medicine (human as well as veterinarian) starts with evidence based homeopathic remedies. Evidence based homeopathic remedies derive from evidence based starting materials. This congress forged the essential link between homeopathic medicine and homeopathic pharmacy, both based on science and technology as well as tradition. The Congress emphasised where responsibilities lie when dealing with new remedies, which is a major step forward.

## ONCOLOGY PANEL DISCUSSION (ECH CONGRESS, 18TH NOVEMBER 2016)

### ROLE OF HOMEOPATHY FOR LIFE QUALITY IN CANCER PATIENTS

J. L. Bagot, M. Frass, S. Kruse, P. Lechleitner, E. Pichler,  
E. Rossi, J. Wurster

Treatment of patients living with cancerous diseases is a great challenge both in conventional and complementary therapies. It poses a challenge for the medical team, for the patients and for their relatives. The objective of this panel discussion was to discuss the most efficient homeopathic solutions, as part of an entire day's programme of fascinating oncological lectures. The main focus was on treating side effects of oncotherapy, together with finding organotropic and constitutional remedies, which help to improve the quality of life of patients.



**Jean-Lionel BAGOT** from Strasbourg is experienced in homeopathic treatment for side effects of the new targeted therapies (TT) in oncology. Side effects produce largely identical symptoms in all TT: fatigue, muco-cutaneous problems and diarrhoea, with the patient experiencing a poor quality of life. These circumstances can force

the oncologist to reduce or even cease treatment prematurely. Applying homeopathy – including a homeopathic dilution of TT called hetero-isotherapy – could be a suitable response for improving the tolerance of and the adherence to cancer treatment. It involves taking a daily dose of a C7 dilution of the TT and the patient also receives a symptomatic remedy as a long term treatment. When

#### 4. **More transparency needed**

HMPWG aims to be as transparent as possible, but according to ECHAMP, more robust processes are required whereby there is a platform for exchange of expertise. It is also apparent that we are missing references of the literature on which the FSD (First Safe Dilution) calculation is based.

The Head of Medical Agencies (HMA) aims for transparency when dealing with European Pharmacopeia, but in reality when their documents are published there is no way to know if and how the comments sent have been taken into account.

#### 5. **Lack of interest from the authorities**

It is interesting to notice that within the HMA only one committee is dedicated to the whole sector of Homeopathy. Additionally, this committee clearly lacks funding and some of its members lack appropriate homeopathic knowledge.

**The outcome** of the constructive discussion in this official setting was that close and transparent cooperation is needed between all stakeholders to keep all homeopathic medicinal products available for humans and animals in future!

**Ilse Muchitsch and H el ene Renoux**

it is necessary to prescribe another homeopathic medicine, the combination with hetero-isotherapy improved its effectiveness. In treating more than 300 patients with hetero-isotherapy Dr. Bagot observed a significant decrease in side effects, allergic risk and late consequences, while no disturbance of the activity of chemotherapy was observed.

**The better tolerance to targeted therapy and an improvement in quality of life help to increase treatment adherence.**

Jean-Lionel Bagot, MD: Saint Vincent Hospital Group,  
Integrative Medicine Dept, Ste Anne Clinic, 182 route de la  
Wantzenau 67000, Strasbourg, France, jlbagot@orange.fr.



**Michael FRASS** has a great deal of experience in using homeopathy for patients with cancer at Vienna University Clinic. He pointed out that the use of classical homeopathy as an add-on treatment in cancer patients has increased worldwide over the past decade. Advantages are cost-effectiveness, ability to be used alongside conventional medicine and the lack of negative effects on metabolism. Studies suggest that homeopathy is able to increase global health status and subjective wellbeing as well as improvement of several functioning parameters – pain, insomnia, dyspnoea, and appetite loss. Retrospective observation shows a possible positive influence on survival rate of patients with advanced stages of cancer. Therefore Dr. Frass **strongly recommends implementing classical homeopathy as an add-on to conventional cancer therapy.**

Michael Frass, MD: Medical University of Vienna, Department of Medicine I, Clinical Division of Oncology, 18-20 Waehringer Guertel 1090 Vienna, Austria; and WissHom (Scientific Society for Homeopathy), K othen, Germany, michael.frass@meduniwien.ac.at



**Sigrid KRUSE, MD** works with young patients together with paediatric oncologists in university children's hospital in Munich, experiencing that paediatric oncology is very different to oncology in adults. She emphasised that **add-on homeopathy in paediatric oncology is of great advantage for parents, medical staff and above all for the children.**

80% of oncologic diseases in children concern acute lymphatic leukaemia (ALL) with a healing rate of greater than 80% using conventional therapy. Dr. Kruse reiterated the opinion of Drs. Bagot and Frass about the advantages of add-on homeopathy to reduce the side effects of oncotherapy. There is often an additional benefit in terms of controlling fears, rage, jealousy and other behavioural disorders, and support in rejuvenation and avoiding relapse.

Parents seek the best treatment for their child, whether complementary or conventional medicine. They realise that their child needs conventional treatment in order to survive but naturally have concerns due to their harsh side effects. They use a range of sources to find out more information, particularly the internet, and are often prepared to give complementary medicine secretly, without informing medical staff. Parents are encouraged to speak openly if the oncological team is open to add-on therapy. This offers a chance to advise parents on the effectiveness and the risks of different methods available. It is very important and a useful way to gain the confidence of all players in the team: parents, the ill child and staff. More than 2000 studies of various homeopathic treatments and cured cases of cancer supports this.



**Peter LECHLEITNER**, from Lienz, reports on the feasibility of add-on cancer treatment in the setting of a modern oncology department. As homeopathy faces challenges in the Evidence Based Medicine environment, especially when treating cancer patients, he suggests performing more

RCTs with clear end-points (relief of symptoms, quality of life, progression free survival, overall survival). There are several challenges when it comes to finding the correct homeopathic remedy, one of which is a lack of homeopathic standard treatment guidelines. Additionally, there are different remedies for the constitution and the tumour itself (organotropics), and miasmatic symptoms could superimpose tumour symptoms. Finally, side effects and blockades by conventional cancer medication result in a symptom mix with different layers. Dr. Lechleitner insists that one of the best ways to overcome these obstacles is to **first treat the side effects, then the tumour, then the constitution.**

Homeopathy (provided along with other CAM treatments) could be a powerful example of bringing conventional and complementary approaches together in a coordinated way.

Peter Lechleitner, MD: Department of Internal Medicine, Teaching Hospital of Lienz, 5 E.v. Hiblestraße 9900 Lienz, Austria, p.lechleitner@kh-lienz.at



**Erfried PICHLER** has been treating children suffering from cancer at the paediatric hospital in Klagenfurt for nearly two decades. In his private clinic he also treats adult cancer patients. The difference in treatment of in and out-patients is the ability to react quickly, when necessary, to physical and psychological side effects during oncotherapy.

**Outpatients use CAM more frequently after conventional therapy.** The aim is to stabilise and balance the immune system, and to improve mental condition – homeopathy works very well in this situation. The first step to help cancer patients is to find the appropriate remedy, the constitutional remedy. Dr Pichler often finds that constitutional remedies reduce side effects caused by chemotherapy. In case of adverse effects the proper acute remedy is needed. A complete cure from cancer is possible but these are exceptional cases. For supplementary therapy he prefers mistletoe injections for adults but not for children.

Erfried Pichler, MD: general practitioner, homeopath and chiropractor in private practice in Klagenfurt, Austria; Head of the homeopathic clinic of paediatric oncology at Klinikum Klagenfurt; President of the Austrian Homeopathic Society, erfried.pichler@tmo.at



**Elio ROSSI** has the opportunity to treat patients suffering from cancer and side effects of oncotherapy at an Integrative Oncology Outpatient Clinic in the public hospital of Lucca. A Complementary Medicine (CM) expert and an oncologist provide nutritional advice, qualified information and evidence-based indications about CM and their potential interactions with anti-cancer drugs.

Prescription of complementary treatment is based on a sufficient level of evidence. Nearly 270 patients were visited consecutively between 2013 and 2016, mainly referred by their medical oncologists. Typical cancer localisation was breast cancer (58%), and a third of patients had metastasis. Nearly all the patients had used or were using chemotherapy and/or radio and/or hormonal therapy. Homeopathy is the main prescribed therapy, exclusively (53%) or integrated with other CTs, mainly botanicals and acupuncture. The Banerji protocol was applied in 15% of patients. Symptoms most frequently treated were adverse effects of anti-cancer therapies (55%), besides the symptoms caused by the disease and the concomitant symptoms. Following the treatment Dr. Rossi observed **significant improvement in nausea, insomnia, depression, anxiety, asthenia and hot flashes, proving that a clinic of integrative oncology is an opportunity to reduce adverse effects of anti-cancer therapy and enhance the quality of life of cancer patients.**

The homeopathic therapy seems to be less effective than an integrated one, but not statistically significant.

Elio Rossi, MD: Homeopathic Clinic, Campo di Marte Hospital, Local Health Tuscany, North West Lucca, Italy.



**Jens WURSTER** represented the well-known St. Croce Clinic. In his experience side effects have to be dealt with first, since most cancer patients have already been in conservative therapy. Therefore all levels of past and ongoing cancer treatment have to be considered (radiation, chemotherapy).

Besides the local manifestations of tumours and specific experience of pain, the emotional disposition of the patient is an important indicator to find an effective remedy. With the help of Q-potencies and the use of organotropic remedies the patient can be stabilised. Impressive results with observation periods of partly more than 10-15 years in different cases of cancer were presented.

**Those who have experienced the power of homeopathy in cancer treatment will never want to do without it again.**

Dr. Wurster was confronted with cancer from his early youth and aimed to explore possibilities to cure it. Triggered through astonishing experiences with homeopathy he specialised in the field of homeopathic cancer therapy (homeopathic education with Dr. Barthel, in supervision by Dr. Dario Spinedi). He is the author of several books, teaches and supervises homeopaths. He has a strong interest in performing clinical studies in the field of cancer as well as on the efficacy of homeopathic high potencies in tumour cell lines, to discover whether cancer cure is possible by activating the immune system, together with the appropriate nutrients.

Jens Wurster, MD: Clinica St. Croce, Orselina, Switzerland

**Edited by Claudia Garn, Edit Katona and Erfried Pichler**

## INTERVIEW OF DORA PACHOVA, THE NEW COORDINATOR OF THE EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE ECH



During the last ECH Council Meeting in Vienna, our colleague Dora Patchova, was unanimously elected to take over as coordinator of the Education Subcommittee, replacing Leopold Drexler. I, Athos Othonos, an Education Subcommittee member, had the pleasure to interview Dora.

***Athos: Dear Dora, as you well know, when it comes to Homeopathy, we always focus on the personality of the individual as being the most important factor of all. Therefore, before discussing about your plans as the new coordinator of the Education Subcommittee, could you please tell us a few things about yourself?***

Dora: I have been a medical doctor since 1987 and a homeopath since 1993. I have 2 grown up children. My husband and whole family are very supporting. I'm a passionate traveller and I'm very grateful that I have been given the chance to explore the world and to share my homeopathic knowledge. I believe nature is our teacher in all possible ways. I like to spend my free time, whenever I have it, with my family and with friends, I like books, music and arts.



***Athos: Why did you choose to become a medical doctor?***

Dora: I decided I wanted to become a doctor when I was 16. My mother is a very good paediatrician and I wanted to be like her. At the same time I wanted to have business trips abroad as my father who was an engineer. Finally, I became aware that one has not to be an engineer in order to travel. At that point, I didn't have any idea about Homeopathy, I just wanted to help people to improve their health.

***Athos: What are your medical studies and assets?***

Dora: I have graduated in 1987 from the Medical University in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. In 1990 I started working in the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in the field of Molecular genetic of oncogenic viruses. I left only after a year because there was no financing for science at that time and applied for a position as a teacher in the School of Complementary Medicine in Plovdiv. In 1993 I attended my first course in Homeopathy and since then I have been studying it ever since.

***Athos: What made you turn to Homeopathy?***

Dora: Since my 3rd year at the University I was not satisfied with the statement: "This disease is incurable and nothing can be done." Homeopathy came to me at a time when I was studying and practicing acupuncture and naturopathy. I was also seeking solutions for medical problems of my family members. It was a love from the first sight – from the first lecture I listened. I found what I was looking for, for so many years.

***Athos: Could you, please, tell us a few things about your homeopathic career up until now, regarding clinical practice and teaching activities?***

Dora: I have 23 years full time homeopathic practice and 21 years of experience in teaching homeopathy. I am one of the people who organised the first homeopathic course in Bulgaria in 1993. We had no teachers in the country, no books and no remedies. So, because of homeopathy I learned English, I learned how to translate, edit and publish books, I understood what it is to teach, to organize seminars and to motivate people, etc. Because of homeopathy I graduated in two additional master programs – homeopathy and psychology. I teach homeopathy in Bulgaria, Macedonia and Turkey. In 2001 we (Maria Djongova and I) founded the Center for Health and Education "Edicta". We started organizing homeopathic courses and international seminars. Edicta is one of the first ten ECH accredited schools. One of the topics we work on and I give lectures internationally is the importance of family dynamics for the homeopathic case taking and management.

**Athos: When did you start serving ECH? What have you done, up until the present time?**

Dora: My first introduction to the ECH was in 2000. I started going to the meetings as a chairperson of the Association of Homeopathic Physicians in Bulgaria. The last 16 years I participate in the ECH meetings and I am member of the Accreditation/Reaccreditation and E-learning teams of the Education Subcommittee.

For me it was very important to connect with the homeopaths from Europe and establish professional relations with the fellow organisations. I have been participating on behalf of Bulgaria in the ECH meetings and worked on various projects in the country and in the EU.

**Athos: From your teaching experience, what do you think ECH should do in the field of Education in order to attract more medical professionals to Homeopathy?**

Dora: In my opinion it's very important that there are meetings between homeopaths and other medical specialists. This is a way to present the possibilities that homeopathy gives to medicine in general. The more medical specialists know about the options they have for themselves and for the patients, the better help they can provide. To achieve this it's very important we present the results of our practice to the medical community. We need to attract not only the young doctors, but also attract new people to homeopathy, experienced conventional doctors, who need a change in their professional life, the clinical homeopathic doctors, who need to deepen their knowledge.

A very important task is to communicate to our colleagues that we need to change the way we present homeopathy to the world. We have to stop proving that homeopathy works and that we have a place in the medical system. We have to know our place, to inform confidently about our results and present the scientific basis how homeopathy works.

**Athos: What are your main goals as a new coordinator of the Education Subcommittee for the next four years?**

Dora: A lot of work has been done so far in the area, which enables us to think for the future projects with clarity. I have set several goals for my time as a coordinator of the Educational subcommittee. The main one will be to provide help for the teaching organizations in the EU: to educate the teachers in better presentation skills, to help their members to record and present their cases on medical congresses and science magazines, to work on the e-learning part of the education, etc.

**Athos: What is the present status regarding the Accreditation of Teaching Centres by the ECH? Are there any changes ahead us?**

Dora: I cannot comment on the topic at the moment. You may ask me again in a year.

**Athos: You are, at the same time, an individual, a family member, a professional, a scientist, a teacher and, recently, a coordinator! How do you plan to keep up with all these different, demanding roles?**

Dora: To be completely honest with you – I have to figure this out in the first weeks of January 2017. I realise I'll have to redirect some of my tasks to other colleagues and to family members so I can embrace fully the responsibilities of a coordinator. I do believe that there is exactly enough time for everything one wants to do in a day, just it has to be properly distributed.

Athos: On behalf of the members of ECH, thank you for this interview, and, most of all, thank you for volunteering to serve the goals of the ECH and Homeopathy for the next four years! We wish you a creative and fruitful service!



## LETTER TO SCHOOLS

Dear Colleagues!

In November 2016 Vienna became host to European homeopathy. There were a variety of interesting presentations and panel discussions during this European Homeopathic Congress, and a merging of new knowledge and the old spirit of classical homeopathy. A range of ideas about educational projects were mooted during ECH subcommittee's working sessions.

- The Education Subcommittee drafted the idea to start a series of educational activities for ECH accredited schools under the motto **"Teach the teachers"**. We believe this will raise the standard of homeopathic practice in Europe to a higher level. One of our projects relates to critical thinking and clinical case report skills.
- The Provings subcommittee is willing to give essential information about provings as part of basic education.
- The Pharmacy subcommittee proposes the development of a 3-4 stage educational programme for pharmacists
- The Research subcommittee has plenty of exciting news to share with the homeopathic community in Europe

In order to elevate homeopathy to its deserved position within European healthcare we need to effectively communicate, first and foremost to the homeopathic teachers, the expert knowledge that ECH has gained in the 25 years since its formation. For this reason we would like **to invite teachers** from ECH accredited schools to get in contact with us in order to become part of ECH educational projects.

We also ask that members of ECH affiliated associations invite homeopathic schools in their countries to learn more about the **ECH accreditation procedure**. Thanks to the diligent work of Subcommittee of Education the procedure is clear and easy to follow. The members of the subcommittee will be more than happy to provide information and support.

A major step forward in the last year was the creation of a **new European Standard** (EN 16872:2016). You can find out more about this on the ECH website <http://homeopathyeurope.org/european-standard-medical-homeopathy-will-become-national-standard/>. We encourage homeopathic teaching centres to implement the standard, for which we are currently working on measures to uphold and promote the standard, which will become official in Europe by April 2017 at the latest.

Please forward this information to homeopathic teachers and teaching centres. There are already 3000 medical doctors with ECH diplomas. We very much look forward to having more accredited teaching centres, more ECH diplomas and more doctors, working according to the new European standard. This is the perfect time to unite at a European level and share our knowledge and achievements.

Sincerely, Dr. Dora Pachova  
ECH Education coordinator



## CRISTAL SUMNER, THE NEW COORDINATOR OF THE PATIENTS/USER SUBCOMMITTEE



Cristal is known to most people. First she has attended ECH Education meetings on behalf of the Faculty of Homeopathy in the UK since about 2002 and only stepped away from that responsibility in 2015. She is currently the Vice President of EFHPA (European Federation of Homeopathic Patients Associations) and is the Chief Executive of the BHA (British Homeopathic Association) which represents patients in the UK. Cristal shared useful standpoints on why and who to address and motivate patients for a common work with homeopaths.

### **How were you introduced to homeopathy? Being a patient or as a healer?**

I was first introduced to homeopathy through my job at the Faculty of Homeopathy. In the year 2000, I was recruited to become the Education and Training Manager and through my work I began to understand the concepts behind homeopathy and its usefulness. Naturally working with a large number of homeopathic doctors it was not long before I was provided with homeopathic medicine for aches and pains and general first aid.

### **What motivated you to participate in the self-organizing activity of patients?**

My work now is centred around the rights of patients to access homeopathic care. Patients are powerful in persuading governments and decision makers, since they can advocate for homeopathy freely without being accused of having a financial interest. Patients however are not always healthy and well, and may need assistance to help get involved or make their views known. I feel we can help other patient groups around Europe and the World advocate for greater use of homeopathy.

### **Cristal, you encouraged those that are from countries without a patient group to consider approaching a patient to make a start. Why is it important? What is the secret? How can you address patients successfully?**

It is critical to have patients involved to maintain, build and defend homeopathic services and medicines. In lobbying governments patients are a very powerful voice. Every country should have a patient group ready to be proactive. Better to have one formed before a crisis arises. In Spain a patient is trying to develop a group and the committee is assisting as much as possible. The committee is there supporting patients in Europe and in turn hopefully ensuring homeopathic doctors can easily practice homeopathic medicine.

### **I don't feel I know the secret to addressing patients at all; as they are all different and unique individuals. However, there are some general rules:**

- 1) listen
- 2) empathise
- 3) show respect
- 4) share information
- 5) find commonality
- 6) use that commonality to get people motivated
- 7) remember small things that mean a lot to keep people involved and interested – sending a thank-you card, having a phone call, putting focus on people who work hard, etc.

### **What was your best experience with patient organizations?**

Best experience is hard to identify off the top of my head. I would say that our work in the UK to ensure access to homeopathic medicines in 2012-13 was very rewarding as patients, and practitioners worked hand in hand to ensure MPs and other decision makers were aware of the issues and we were, for a change, listened to and access remained intact.

### **Why did you decide to switch from the Education to the Patients/User team?**

I am now only Chief Executive of the BHA (not both the BHA and Faculty of Homeopathy as before), a charity established in 1902, which works to increase patient access to homeopathy in the UK. The BHA is a patient-based organisation and over the past five years I have also been sitting at the Patient/User SC. For the last 3, as the Vice President/Vice Chair.

### **You are very active in various positions in many homeopathic organizations, and you have little children at the same time. How do you have so much energy?**

I don't really have that much energy. You should see me on a Friday night! Far from partying it up, I am more likely falling asleep next to my 2 year old at 19.30. Thanks for the compliment though! I think life in homeopathy is always interesting, challenging and rewarding which keeps me going and working toward a better tomorrow where homeopathy is recognised as an important part of medicine.

### **Some years ago you ran the London (?) Marathon to raise money for a homeopathic charity. Are you still running regularly?**

Ha! You have a good memory. I ran a very hilly marathon in Sussex (a county in England) several years ago and raised close to £3000 for the British Homeopathic Association. I still run but only do 3-4 miles when I go out due to my knee which tells me when I go too far. Even with the knee I want to try a long run again as I felt I could have done better last time round. Or maybe I will do some other challenge that interests me and could also raise money for the British Homeopathic Association. What about you?

### **Well, I did not attempt that distance yet, only the half, which was more than enough for me. But similar to you I always look for challenges. Cristal, my last question to you: what do you need for the Patient Subcommittee to be successful?**

Information sharing and working together with doctors to both promote and defend homeopathy in the EU is what is needed. It is important patients know where to look to find others in their country and also important the doctors know where to point their patients who are interested in promoting and defending homeopathy. The Patient/User SC is launching a new website to hopefully help increase cross language and country information sharing. It will be a hub of information for patients around Europe, accessible in 6 languages (English, French, German, Spanish, Italian and Dutch). EFHPA will also be active on Social media to enhance engagement across Europe. ECHAMP has helped facilitate this process through a special grant.

### **Thank you for the interview. In the name of my colleagues I wish you much joy, success and good health in your new position!**

**Edit Katona**

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR HOMEOPATHY

The recent European Congress for Homeopathy in Vienna represents an excellent example of the power of collaboration, as the European Committee for Homeopathy (ECH), the International Association for Veterinary Homeopathy (IAVH) and the European Federation of Homeopathic Patients' Associations (EFHPA) came together to produce a hugely successful event.

This was not the first such occasion – our organisations jointly addressed the subject of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) as part of an AMR campaign. ECH's Dr Lex Rutten drafted a very comprehensive and since highly referenced report, and Dr Liesbeth Ellinger, of IAVH, presented her study on successful homeopathic prevention of diarrhoea on piglets without the use of antibiotics.

The co-operation with EFHPA is even more evident – EFHPA hosts ECH's patients' subcommittee and as such is very closely linked to all ECH projects and achievements.

We will continue to work in this manner and aim to maximise the opportunities to build upon this cooperation.

Building a strong coalition to promote and defend homeopathy in Europe is a priority. This means involving industry, policymakers, health professionals, researchers, patients, social networks and mass media. Cooperation should also be fostered with partners from non-European countries and organisations involved with agro-homeopathy.

The coalition could have some common goals such as:

- Increasing research funding for homeopathy
- Promoting the integration of homeopathy in the national health care systems
- Fostering good quality training
- Availability of homeopathic medicinal products

We can learn from each other. There are countless success stories, ranging from full integration of homeopathy in the national health



*From left to right: Dr Edward De Beukelaer IAVH President, Mrs Enid Segall EFHPA President and Dr Thomas Peinbauer former ECH President during the welcome reception of the congress in Vienna.*

insurance, such is the case in Switzerland, to homeopathic hospitals with increased quality of care as seen in Tuscany, Italy.

Clearly the situation is not easy when homeopathy is faced with fierce criticism. However, in many ways this can help us to become stronger, more committed and able to convey our messages in a clearer way to patients, citizens and policymakers.

We are confident that we will succeed in our efforts to put medical homeopathy higher in the political agenda and to advance in the integration of homeopathy in the European health care systems.

A strong coalition of industry, policymakers, researchers, patients and health professionals is paramount if we are to succeed in our endeavour. We have a great advantage: homeopathy empowers patients and is really a patient-centred medicine.

**Dr H el ene Renoux, ECH President and Dr Jaume Costa, ECH General Secretary.**

## ECHOING: NEWLY FORMED COMMUNICATION WORKING GROUP IN ECH

Due to **growing interest towards communication** challenges in ECH, we proposed the need to develop more professional communication in homeopathy at a plenary session in Vilnius last April. Following meetings in November at the ECH Congress in Vienna, the decision was taken to form a communication working group within ECH!



ECHOING.

Once the decision was made, newly-elected President H el ene Renoux personally addressed some members who had expressed an interest in communications. Members from various subcommittees, from different countries and with varied skills and interests joined the group **with one aim: internal and external communication and networking for ECH to achieve better awareness and recognition of medical homeopathy.** The group was shortly named after its function: ECHOING (credit to Tomasz).

*ECHOING for awareness of Homeopathy (Pixabay, CCO Creative Commons)*

The first **contributors** are Helene Renoux, Jaume Costa, Dora Pachova, Cristal Sumner – from the Council. From the subcommittees: Claudia Garn, Tomasz Kokoszczyński, Athos Othonos and Edit Katona. Chris Connolly from UK is of great help in implementing the plans; he is responsible for the technical background and the final layout of content. The composition of the group may vary in time, and will depend on circumstances, inspiration and the free time of its creative members.

ECHOING makes use of **modern communication** tools, intent on developing the most **efficient** and **instantaneous** communication channels to satisfy the needs of ECH members in the 21st century. Other young homeopaths also skilled in new communication will help to bring more energy to the group.

**ECHOING welcomes everybody** who:

- offers her/his help in sharing thoughts and news, special knowledge
- has ability to write articles, interviews and posts
- enjoys collecting photos, pictures, illustrations, draws, quotes, videos, films

**Communication channels of ECH** (current)

- Council and Subcommittee meetings, General Assembly
- E-mail groups on ECH, Council, Subcommittee level
- Newsletter – two editions per year

- Website renewed with valuable content
- Social media/Facebook for quick updates

#### **Information for creating the higher order**

Homeopathy is information medicine. Our remedies “broadcast” the necessary information to living organisms. The source of information surrounds us, but requires energising to fulfil its role, to trigger the processes in the organism which result in improved functioning. Even a minute amount of the **right information in the right form** is sufficient for the change. More efficient operation helps the organism to perform higher order mission more effectively. Many of us believe there is a **higher order mission** of not only creatures in our world but also the European Committee for Homeopathy.

#### **Information from YOUR part is a drop in the ocean!**

**Edit Katona, present coordinator** (katona.edit7@chello.hu)

## **ECH WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT**

### **INTERVIEW WITH CHRIS CONNOLLY**



Chris Connolly has a special role in ECH: after completing his BA (Hons) degree in Business and Marketing from Sheffield Hallam University in 2014, he started working full-time with the British Homeopathic Association and Faculty of Homeopathy. Here he came to be involved with ECH. One of his responsibilities is to manage its digital platforms. That means day-to-day running

of the ECH website, ensuring content is updated and as user-friendly as possible. Additionally, Chris publishes content to the ECH social media accounts (Facebook/ Twitter/ LinkedIn/ YouTube) based on activities and developments in homeopathy across Europe and globally.

#### **Chris, what do you like the most in your ECH activities? How do you gauge success in this field?**

I have a passion for all things digital and language so enjoy all elements of my work! It has been rewarding to see the progress made on social media, with the reach and engagement of ECH posts continually improving, as well as building a strong follower base across all platforms. ECH now has a combined following of over 3000, so social media has now become a very useful communication tool.

#### **What can you help to the newly formed communication working group?**

I proofread all communications and provide English editing where necessary. Any news, reports or events which should be shared can be sent to me to be prepared for publishing across digital channels.

#### **Do you have common work with Cristal Sumner and Sara Eames at the Faculty of Homeopathy in UK?**

Cristal introduced me to ECH during her tenure as Chief Executive of the Faculty of Homeopathy. Although she is now solely Chief Executive of the British Homeopathic Association and I only work for the Faculty of Homeopathy, we are still based in the same office in London and our core aims and objectives are very much aligned. Sara and I are in frequent contact regarding Faculty of Homeopathy Council activities and for academic purposes concerning the Royal London Hospital for Integrated Medicine, which is one of the Faculty of Homeopathy’s accredited teaching centres.

#### **We as ECH members and member states would like to work together more and more efficiently and successfully in communicating ourselves for the awareness and acceptance of homeopathy. What is your message, what is your advice for ECH members?**

Digital media offers a great opportunity for instant networking and communication across the globe. Whilst we have continued to utilise its power, there is still potential to be more effective. LinkedIn and Facebook groups offer the chance to network internally so all stakeholders can keep up-to-date. Consistency in external messages is imperative in order to improve the standing of homeopathy in European health care and internal awareness is necessary if this is to be achieved. We plan to make use of further tools to make internal communication easier and more effective, which will harness the knowledge and enthusiasm of the homeopathic community. Members are encouraged to play as active a role as possible, as the more engaged our members are the more powerful our messages will be.

#### **Thank you for the interview. And thank you very much for your youthful contribution for the awareness of ECH and homeopathy globally.**

**Edit Katona**



## FOR YOUR DIARY

### ■ ECH Spring Meeting, Alkmaar, 21–22 April 2017

Meetings of the ECH Council and Subcommittees.  
Visits to the Remedy Bank Laboratory and Botanical Garden.  
More information: [info@homeopathyeurope.org](mailto:info@homeopathyeurope.org)

### ■ Colloquium organised by the UNIO HOMEOPATHICA BELGICA (UHB) 13 May 2017

Brussels: from basic research to homeopathic practice, addressing the DYNHOM project.  
More information: [www.homeopathie-unio.be/fr/general](http://www.homeopathie-unio.be/fr/general)

### ■ 3rd HRI International Homeopathy Research Conference, Cutting Edge Research in Homeopathy, Malta, 9–11 June 2017

The programme includes topics such as clinical research (quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods), disease prevention, fundamental research, laboratory-based research, pathogenetic trials and veterinary research. The Congress will take place at the Radisson Blue Resort in St. Julians Malta from 9–11 June 2017.  
Early registration fee is available until 3 March 2017.  
More information: [www.hrimalta2017.org/](http://www.hrimalta2017.org/)

### ■ LMHI Congress 2017, Networking in Medical Care – Collaboration for the Benefit of the Patient, Leipzig, 14–17 June 2017

The central theme of the Congress is the open dialogue between homeopathy and other medical systems. Main topics of the Congress are pain management, neurological and psychiatric disorders, intensive and palliative care, epidemics and cystitis. Veterinary, pharmacy, dentistry and research on homeopathy are also in the programme. The Congress will take place in the "Leipzig Congress Hall" (Kongress-Halle Leipzig) from 14–17 June 2017.  
Early registration fee is available until 28 February 2017.  
More information: [www.lmhi-congress-2017.de/](http://www.lmhi-congress-2017.de/)

### ■ ECH Autumn Symposium, Prague, 17–19 November 2017

Meetings of the ECH Council and Subcommittees.  
More information: [info@homeopathyeurope.org](mailto:info@homeopathyeurope.org)

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