

Report

World Homeopathic Day 2017

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The celebration of the World Homeopathic Day, tribute to Samuel Hahnemann, took place April 22nd and 23rd 2017, at Courtyard by Marriot Hotel (Brampton, Canada).

I had the pleasure to be there as LMHI Prime Vice-president representing our association. I was wonderfully received by Dr. Bhupinder Sharma (LMHI NVP for Canada, Council Member and Past President of the College of Homeopaths of Ontario) and Basil Ziv (Registrar and CEO of the College of Homeopaths of Ontario). The event was entitled “International Convention of World Homeopathic Day” and was organized by the Homeopathic Medical Association of Canada (HMAC). The North American Society of Homeopaths (NASH), Ontario Homeopathic Association (OHA) and the Syndicat professionnel des homéopathes du Québec supported this gathering.

There were many excellent presentations during the convention, but the main topic was “Defining the role of Homeopathy within Ontario’s health-care system”. There were two round tables related to this topic, in which I had the honor to participate.

On Saturday 22nd I sat together with Dr. Raj Manchanda, Louis Klein, Robert Field, Dr. Kumar Dhawale, Martine Jourde, Dr. Ghulam Murtoza and Basil Ziv to discuss “Opportunities for Homeopathy within mainstream health care”. We debated about the best way to introduce homeopathy to an integrated health-care system, taking into account that this introduction is happening now in Ontario. In this opportunity I expressed:

“The integration of Homeopathy into the health system in each country is an act of justice towards a therapy that persists in spite of the attacks against it since it was discovered.

The first ones to be benefited with this integration are the patients, who are able to access a holistic therapeutic system with less cost for them. The lack of collateral effects of our remedies gives the patients a better therapeutic possibility.

Apart from that, the benefit produced by the homeopathic remedy when it is aimed to heal the chronic disease, understanding it as our philosophy does, puts the patient in the situation of having less clinical problems, which results in their wellbeing.

Besides, the reduction of the costs is also a benefit for the Government, since the investment should be smaller. In addition, the rationalization of complementary studies and the reduction of iatrogenic effects that may produce remedies used by standard medicine, also contribute to reduce the costs of the attention.

In this regard, it is good to remind a recent study published in the *BMJ*¹ which showed that medical errors are the third cause of death in the USA, and between them can be found the use, abuse and the collateral effects of conventional remedies.

Several studies that have been performed show not only the efficacy of results in recovery but also the reduction of costs in homeopathic treatments." [...] "All these studies show what homeopaths already know: the usefulness of homeopathy, confirm its benefits for the patients and its utility regarding the costs and quality of attention if it is integrated in the health system.

Regarding the benefits of its integration for the community of homeopaths, we reasonably could expect fewer attacks against the practice, although that still happens for example in the United Kingdom, despite the fact that the integration exists.

As Poitevin² and Manchanda³ have already pointed out, we would have benefits regarding education and a more qualified practice with policies of entities that control it, and more possibilities to develop clinical and basic research.

The integration into a health system where the hegemonic paradigm is the one of biomedicine, has unquestionable advantages but, at the same time, certain precautions have to be taken into account.

We must not give up in our practice the concepts of totality and individuality for the election of the homeopathic remedy.

In this aspect, homeopathy differs from the practice of standard medicine, where symptoms and clinical manifestations are treated, but not the vital unbalance that these cause.

That is why, considering the patient as a psychophysical totality with the unbalance he brings to the practice, evidenced through the disease, and selecting the remedy based on the sick individual and not based on the disease, are essential in our practice and this is how we must integrate with any health system. This is a humanitarian practice of homeopathy that we must never abandon".

On Sunday 23rd April at 9.20 I participated in the round table "Practical applications of patients first-action plan for health care" with the same colleagues. This invocation to concentrate the health plan in the patient is the motivation of any physician dedicated to Homeopathy, as it was the *desideratum* of its discoverer, Samuel Hahnemann.

Actually, if we follow the definition of "Health" provided by the WHO, the homeopathic treatment carries out its search more precisely than the biomedical system.

In 1986 the WHO issued a document produced during the first international conference for the promotion of Health, organized in Ottawa, Canada, which modifies the definition from 1948. In this document it is said that health is "a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living.

¹ Makari M, Daniel, M. Medical error—the third leading cause of death in the US *BMJ* 2016;353:i2139

² Poitevin B. Integrating Homoeopathy in health systems. *Bull World Health Organ* 1999;77:160-6.

³ Manchanda R. *IndianJResHomoeopathy* 1011-6108515_165805

Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities”.

From this definition we can deduce the following reflections:

1. health involves three aspects: the physical, social and personal aspects;
2. health is NOT an end in itself, but a resource, a condition necessary for the development of daily life. And it is a resource that allows personal and social development. In this sense, it proposes not to “live” for health, but to “be healthy” to be able to live.

In general, this is not a priority in the biomedical paradigm that runs in health systems.

Homeopathy, on the other hand, is closer to this vision of the WHO than the biomedical paradigm is.

If we turn to the end of the already quoted § 9 of the Organon, Hahnemann says: “[...] *so that our indwelling, reason-gifted mind can freely employ this living, healthy instrument for the higher purpose of our existence*”.

Here, Hahnemann manifests that the state of balance achieved by the vital power over health allows the spirit to head towards a higher end. This means that the state of health or disease determines the possibilities of development of the human being. This addition made by Hahnemann in the paragraph where he formulates what is the state of health is a magnificent precedent, unusual to the period it was written, to the definition given by the WHO in 1986.

The efforts of our colleagues from Canada are giving their results, to celebrate with justice the World Homeopathic Day and making possible the integration of our art to an integrated health care system.

I want to thank the HMAC, Dr. Bhupinder Sharma, our NVP in Canada, and Basil Ziv for their generous welcome; and to everyone involved in the success of this conference. I wish you success to continue with your endeavor.