

# Homeopathy

## Introduction & Overview of the Sector

Homeopathy was founded 200 years ago by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann who gave direction to this branch of medicine with his famous concept “similia similibus curentur” (‘let like cure likes’). Homeopathy is based on three basic principles:

1. The rule of similia
2. Testing of medicament in healthy human being
3. The principle of homeopathic doses.

Hahnemann studied many substances that led him to establish new rules of cure by use of substances which are capable of creating such disturbances in healthy human beings, by use of same substances in micro quantitative level.

The system of Homeopathy that he developed is holistic as it considers the entire individual’s physical, mental and emotional symptoms and treats the sum of the symptoms according to the “rule of similia”.

In 1866, Samuel Hahnemann founded the Homeopathic Central Pharmacy to manufacture and sell homeopathic medicine. He also created prescribed standards for homeopathic pharmaceuticals production known as “Pharma Copoeia Homeopathic Polyglotta” which was later revised and is known as German Homeopathic Pharma Copoeia (HAB) which serves as international reference for homeopathic standards today.

In India, the history of Homeopathy is linked with the name of Dr. Honiberger, a French man who brought Homeopathy to India in 1829. He was invited to treat Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Punjab. He later on started practicing in Calcutta. The influx of homeopath and Homeopathy was more in Calcutta & later on became the site of first Homeopathy College in India. The system spread from eastern region to U.P, Delhi, Kerala and Karnataka. In the second phase of expansion, the spread took place in

Northern and Western India. Dr M.L. Sirkar was first qualified physician in India.

Subsequently, the Government of India constituted a Homeopathic Inquiry Committee in 1948, which submitted its report in 1949. A few state governments extended recognition by suitable enactment in fifties, finally leading to government of India recognizing the system in 1960. With this followed the constitution of an advisory committee, Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia Committee and Central Council of Homeopathy. A homeopathic Pharmacopoeia laboratory was established in 1975, which formed the nucleus of establishment of Central Council for Research in Homeopathy.

Today there are over 1,50,000 institutionally qualified homeopaths, and over 2.5 lakhs practitioners under certain legal rights and protection given to them. In addition, there are over ten lakh persons or more patronizing it as self-medicating Homeopathy knowing person.

According to a recent survey conducted by Dabur research organisation, the market size of homeopathic industry in India is estimated to be of Rs 600 crores which holds 14% share in total Indian system of medicine and Homeopathy.

The sector constitutes of

1. Registered Homeopathic practitioners (institutionally qualified and non-institutionally qualified),
2. Manufacturing units or pharmacy involved in production of homeopathic medicines and products
3. Both government and non government, homeopathic research institutes/council owned privately or by government,
4. Hospitals and dispensaries.

## **Homeopaths**

The persons who have the knowledge of Homeopathy and who offer treatment to other persons are the practitioners who have gained professional knowledge through some training or the education in this

field. And these are the people, who are responsible for the spread and success of the system.

As of 1.1.1999 estimates, the number of registered practitioners were estimated at 188527 that constituted 30.9% of total Indian system of medicine and homeopathic practitioner. (Table 2.1, Indian system of medicine and Homeopathy in India 1998). The number of homeopathic registered practitioner showed an increase of 2.7% on an average and it varied between 4.2 to 1.1% for the years 1991 to 1999.

In the exercise of power conferred by the Homeopathy Central Council Act 1973, the central council has taken expeditious steps towards putting medical education in Homeopathy and practice on a proper footing keeping in view the national requirements. It has introduced with the prior sanction of central government and the following educational Regulation for diploma, degree and post-graduate degree courses for maintaining uniformity of medical education at all India level:

1. Homeopathy (Diploma courses) D.H.M.S Regulations 1983 – DHMS courses spread over a period of four years including compulsory internship of six months duration after passing the final diploma examination.
2. Homeopathy (Degree course) B.H.M.S Regulation 1983 – spread over a period of five and a half years including internship of one year duration after passing final year degree examination.
3. Homeopathy (Graded Degree courses) B.H.M.S Regulations 1983 – spread over a period of 2 years including internship of six months duration after passing the final degree examination.
4. Homeopathy (PG degree course) M.D (hom.) Regulations, 1989 (which were amended) PG Degree Courses M.D (Hom) (Amendment) Regulation 1992 – Central Council has prescribed PG Degree Courses in Homeopathy subject i.e. Materia Medica, homeopathic philosophy & Repertory which spread over 3 years duration including one year of house job or equivalent.
5. Teacher Training – intensive 3-week program have been circulated by central council.

All over India there are 118 Homeopathic Medical college/ institutes imparting education in Homeopathy. Out of these, 83 institutes are non-

government organisation and about 33 government supported unit (1998 ISM&H report). The increase in the number of Registered practitioners is given as annexure 4 (viii).

## **Manufacturing Units**

Homeopathic medicine as well as the industry is regulated by the Drug and Control Act. Quality of raw materials as well as finished product of some of the fast moving items are covered by Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia which is published by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare in five volumes.

## **Legal Definition of Homeopathic Medicines (GOI)**

“Homeopathic medicines includes any drug which is recorded in homeopathic proving or therapeutic efficacy of which has been established through long clinical experience as recorded in authoritative homeopathic literature of India or abroad and which is prepared according to the technique of homeopathic pharmacy and covers combination of ingredients of such homeopathic medicines which is administered by parental route”.

Government of India listed 2373 drugs used as homeopathic medicines in 1965, which was subsequently increased to 3000. In this system, the most frequently used drugs are called Polycrest. And in this context it should be noted that for homeopathic medicines clinical and biological trial are conducted where they are tested for toxicity on long term, short term and medium term use.

Currently, there are 863 manufacturing units all over India of which 100 can be said to be organised. Out of these, three units are those belonging to foreign companies like Willmer Shwabe, Sharda Borion (SBL) and Bioforce. The companies in organised sector are professionally managed production facilities with modern equipment and technology. The main products that are manufactured by these units are medicines. Other products like shampoo, pastes and creams are also manufactured by some of these units. All these things are sold under the prescription of

medical practitioners. However, the market for homeopathic products other than drugs is very small in India. A list of manufacturers of homeopathic medicines is appended as annexure 4(iii).

Manufacturing of homeopathic medicines require raw materials in the form of different plant, chemicals of animal origin and bacteria, micro-organism & certain disease causing factors. These are processed to obtain the mother tincture. Then they are processed further according to the pharmacopoeia for Homeopathy. These are diluted in alcohol at different potency levels according to the requirement of the medicines. Then the quality control test is done in the laboratory.

The source of homeopathic medicines can be classified like following:

60% is of plant origin

25% is of chemical or mineral origin

10% is of animal origin

5% from bacteria, micro-organism & certain disease causing factors

Since Homeopathy originated from Germany the industry is still using 150 raw materials, which are of imported origin like plants not grown in India, and minerals not found in India.

In homeopathic industry the raw material are taken and processed. From them mother tincture is obtained. This is diluted further in alcohol. It is interesting to note that in Homeopathy the raw material requirement is not substantially large because they are used in very small quantities and then it is further diluted. But the environment required is pollution free, dust free and bacteria free. Normally, bigger companies undertake extraction, as it involves significant technical know how. Dilution, however, does not require much complication, though the environment requirements still remain. There is also a prevalent practice of mixing two or more homeopathic medicine and selling it in brand name. Estimated sale of such branded products constitutes 30% of total sales.

The technology involved in Homeopathy has evolved over time, with scientists and pharmacists working in the industry taking American, German & French methods of production as their base. The

manufacturing base in India is however, not homogeneous. The production facilities available in the organised manufacturing sector are far more superior to the facilities for smaller units. Larger units maintain a quality control unit and research testing labs, which the smaller operations cannot always afford.

Here it should be noted that the technical requirement of the homeopathic industry is high. And interestingly, technical manpower in India is deficient, in spite of the system being more popular in India compared to other countries. In more advanced countries where Homeopathy is recognised systems of medicine high tech systems are used for production in view of the technical requirements of the system.

## **Research System in Homeopathy**

Government of India established the CCRIM&H in 1969. 1978 it was dissolved and four independent Research councils were established. CCRH was constituted on 30<sup>th</sup> march 1978. Now it acts as an autonomous organisation.

### **Aims & Objectives of the research council**

- ?? To formulate aims and patterns of research on scientific lines in Homeopathy;
- ?? To undertake research or other programmes;
- ?? To initiate, develop and coordinate scientific research in fundamental and applied aspects of Homeopathy;
- ?? To exchange information with other institutions, associations and societies interested in the objectives similar to those of Central Council and especially in observation and study of diseases;
- ?? To promote and assist institution of research for the study of diseases, their prevention and cure, especially with emphasis for covering the rural population of the country;
- ?? To prepare, print, publish and exhibit papers, posters, pamphlets, periodicals and books for furtherance of the objectives of the Central Council and contribute to the literature;

?? To offer prizes and grant scholarships in furtherance of the objectives of the Council;

Central Council of Research has a network of research units and centers in different states of the country. There are about 60 research units supported by CCRH spread across the country, some of which are listed in the table given in annexure 4(v).

## **Funding**

The total budget allocated by government of India for the development of Indian system of Medicine and Homeopathy has been increasing overtime. In the first plan, budget allocated for ISM&H was just Rs 0.40 crores which has increased to Rs. 59.13 crores for the single year 1999-2000.

During 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> plan, resource allotted for the development was Rs 104.43 crores and Rs 266.35 crores respectively. These figures show the growing realization by government of the importance of alternative system of medicines.

Currently, the budget allocated to ISM&H is Rs 95.94 crores for the development and expenditure of four central research councils, of which Homeopathy accounts for 16.43 crores alone. In this context it would be interesting to note that in some European countries also funds have been allocated for furthering research in the field of Homeopathy. Governments in four countries of Europe - Norway, Germany, Netherlands and United Kingdom have granted funds for research work in complementary and alternative medicines. For example, in Norway government allocates a total of 2 million Kroner, and majority of this goes to research projects on Homeopathy and acupuncture. While in Germany 6 million German mark have been given for research on Homeopathy.

## **Hospitals and Dispensaries**

Hospitals and dispensaries are the important part of infrastructure of the any medicine system. Their growth in a country can be taken as the indicator of growing importance and popularity of the system among

masses. This growth provides justification for the increased focus and expenses on the medicine system as whole. Studying the past few years trend we can say that there has been an increase in the number of homeopathic dispensaries and hospitals. The number of hospitals owned by the government till 1996 were greater than the number owned by other private and voluntary organisation, but this difference was very small. Government actively participates in setting up of the dispensaries and managing them. The number of dispensaries owned by the CGHS is large and has been increasing overtime. Separate homeopathic dispensaries are also set up under Ministry of Railways & Labour. Annexure 4(vii) gives a list of Hospitals and Dispensaries in India.