Assessing the Health of the United States Homeopathic Community

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Types of Homeopathic Research

1. Basic Science
2. Clinical Science
3. Homeopathic Science (eg. Provings)
4. Community Science
5. Educational Science
Purpose of Community Research

- Assess the health of the US Homeopathic Community
- Provides benchmarks to measure where we are against the past, internationally and better plan for our future
- Helps us to better understand the homeopathic community including:
  - Demographics of Patients, Practitioners and Educators
  - Success Rates in Treatment, Practice and Education
  - Cost Effectiveness of Treatment, Practice and Education
  - Effectiveness of various styles and types of homeopathic practice
  - Self awareness-needed to grow
Key Questions

- How healthy is the US homeopathic community?
  - Homeopathic Medicine-1% of CAM Visits
  - 11th most common form of CAM in terms of visits to practitioners
  - 5th most common in out of pocket costs
AMCH Community Research

- National Homeopathic Practitioner Survey
  - Completed 2006
  - 1150 participants

- National Homeopathic Patient Survey
  - Completed 2007
  - 1150 participants

- National Homeopathic Educational Survey
  - Completed 2008
  - Students, teachers, administrators
  - 300 participants

Complete results available at www.amcofh.org/Research/CommunityScienceResearch
Patient Survey
How Successful is Homeopathic Treatment?
Homeopathic Treatment Results are Not Due to the Effects of Placebo

- Placebo response rate is generally around 30-40%
- General response rate to homeopathic treatment was 79%
- There was a lack of significant correlation between length of time in treatment to results ($r=0.007$ with a p value of 0.862, i.e., not at all significant). Placebo effects tend to occur early in treatment and then taper off over time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Women get better results than men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Younger patients do not respond as well to treatment; elderly patients show an average response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species</td>
<td>Animals show the same response rate as humans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Married Patients Get Better Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Level</td>
<td>Average Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity to Conventional Medication</td>
<td>Slightly Improved Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity to Homeopathic Medication</td>
<td>Slightly Improved Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical Homeopathy</td>
<td>Average Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex Homeopathy</td>
<td>Slightly Reduced Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined Classical and Complex</td>
<td>Average Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Length of Treatment</td>
<td>Slightly Improved Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent Visits to Practitioner</td>
<td>Average Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Treatment Responders</td>
<td>Slightly Improved Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Treatment Failures</td>
<td>Average Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parameter</td>
<td>Result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endocrinology chief complaint</td>
<td>Reduced response rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gynecology, Immunology, Infectious Disease, chief complaint</td>
<td>Improved Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polycrest Prescriptions</td>
<td>Average Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent Antidoting</td>
<td>Reduced Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Side Effects</td>
<td>Reduced Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Compliance With Treatment</td>
<td>Reduced Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding How Homeopathy Works</td>
<td>Improved Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiology, Dermatology, Gastrointestinal, Musculoskeletal, Neurological, Psychiatric, Pulmonary chief complaint</td>
<td>Average Response Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Cost</td>
<td>Reduced Response Rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Do Homeopathic Practitioners Treat?
Do Homeopathic Patients Reflect the Typical Diversity of the US Population?
We found that there were many populations that were underserved by homeopathic medicine. These included:

- Low income populations
- Hispanic community
- African American community
- Native American community
- Elderly
Ethnic Diversity of Homeopathic Patients

- African Amer.
- Asian
- Caucasian
- East Indian
- Hispanic
- Middle Eastern
- Native American
- Other

Total % vs. Ntl. Avg %
Is Homeopathic Treatment Affordable?

- National Homeopathic Patient Survey
- This was a major complaint of homeopathic patients in the survey.
- However the average cost of homeopathic treatment annually was only $580.78 per year.
- The average cost savings of the reduction in conventional medication and supplements was $1033.20 per year.
- This makes for a net cost savings of $452.42 per year.
What Do Homeopathic Patients Like Least About Treatment?

- **Side Effects**
- **Distance to Travel**
- **Hard Work**
- **Cost**
- **Slower Pace**
Average Cost for Homeopathic Medication (in US Dollars)

- Animal
- Elderly
- Young
- Classical
- Complex
- Sens to Remedies
- Male
- Female
- Const Only
- Good Responders
- Poor Responders
- Overall

Cost range from 0 to 500 US Dollars.
Average Cost Savings From Reduction in Conventional Medication (in US Dollars)

- Animal
- Elderly
- Young
- Complex
- Classical
- Sens to Remedies
- Male
- Female
- Const Only
- Overall

Cost Savings Ranges:
- 0 to 500
- 500 to 1000
- 1000 to 1500
- 1500 to 2000
- 2000 to 2500
Patient Survey Recommendations

1. The homeopathic community needs to train more homeopathic practitioners.
2. The homeopathic community needs to reach out to more diverse ethnic groups for treatment.
3. The homeopathic community needs to find better ways of reaching men in homeopathic treatment.
4. Further research needs to be done on comparing the efficacy of complex vs. classical homeopathic treatments.
5. Further research needs to be done comparing the results of this survey to other alternative medicine fields within the United States.
Patient Survey Recommendations

7. Further research needs to be done comparing the efficacy of hahnemannian methods vs. more modern methods of prescribing.

8. The homeopathic community should seek out methods to improve affordability for its patients.

9. Research needs to be done on reevaluating the potential for homeopathic treatment to cause side effects (other than a return of old symptoms).

10. The homeopathic community needs to do a better job in educating its patients about how homeopathic medicine works.

11. The homeopathic community should develop better marketing strategies that reflect the needs of their patients.
Practitioner Survey
Are There Enough Homeopathic Practitioners?
Are There Sufficient Numbers of Homeopathic Practitioners in the US.

- Levels of Practice (Practitioner Survey)
  - Level One: Appreciator
  - Level Two: Experimenter
  - Level Three: Acute Prescriber
  - Level Four: Integrative Prescriber
  - Level Five: Homeopathic Practitioner

- A Primary Complaint of Patients About Homeopathic Practice (Patient Survey)
  - Long Distance to Travel to Practitioner
  - Difficulty Locating a Practitioner

- Paucity vs. Density of Practitioners in Certain States
## Numbers of US Homeopathic Practitioners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practitioner</th>
<th>Level Five</th>
<th>Level Four</th>
<th>Level Three</th>
<th>Level Two</th>
<th>Level One</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MD, DO</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>7000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ND</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAc, OMD</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVM</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlicensed</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>12,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2200</td>
<td>6350</td>
<td>32,500</td>
<td>288,000</td>
<td>12,120,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relative Distribution of Homeopathic Practitioners per Capita

AZ: +3.45
CO: +4.0
KS: -4.65
Missouri: -9.8
SC: 4 -3.6
VT: +4.3
It is impossible to make a living practicing homeopathic medicine?

National Homeopathic Practitioner Survey (Monthly income) (%)

- None
- MD
- ND
- RN
- DVM
- OMD/LAc

Average Monthly Income ($)

- Less than $5000
- $5000 to $10000
- $10000 to $15000
- $15000 to $20000
- $20000 or more
Is Success in Treatment Dependent on What Methods Are Used?
Homeopathic Treatment Methodologies

- We found in this study that patient reported success for classical homeopathy was statistically higher in all categories than for complex homeopathic treatment [overall success (p=.002); chief complaint (p=.001); Mental/emotional improvement (p=.006); Physical improvement (p=.0009); Well being improvement (.002); Improvement in energy (p=.009); Improvement in awareness (p=.009)].

- We found that there were no statistically significant differences between classical homeopathic treatment and combined classical and complex homeopathic treatment.

- Success rates were the same for those patients treated with polycrest remedies and those treated with smaller remedies.
Success Rates by Type of Homeopathic Treatment (%)

- Overall
- Main Complaint
- Mental and Emotional
- Physical
- Well Being
- Energy
- Self Awareness

Classical Only
Complex Only
Combined
Does Educating Our Patients Effect Treatment Success?
Success Rates and Patient Education (%)

- Overall: 76%
- High Understanding: 82%
- Low Understanding: 72%
Practitioner Survey Recommendations

1. The homeopathic community needs to find way to attract younger practitioners into the profession.

2. The homeopathic community needs to find ways to attract more men to the field.

3. The homeopathic community needs to find ways to attract more ethnically diverse practitioners, especially African Americans and Hispanics.

4. The homeopathic community needs to do a better job at attracting homeopathic practitioners as their first career.

5. The homeopathic community needs to find ways to increase the length of veterinary homeopathic education.
Practitioner Survey Recommendations

6. The homeopathic community needs to find ways to attract DC’s and PA’s to the homeopathic profession.

7. The homeopathic community needs to charge more for homeopathic services.

8. The homeopathic community needs to find ways to make the homeopathic profession more lucrative for its membership.
Educational Survey
Is Homeopathic Education Growing in the US?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>1998 Study</th>
<th>2008 Study</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Schools</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>A 19.4% reduction in the number of schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Length of School</td>
<td>10 Years</td>
<td>8 Years</td>
<td>Some of the oldest schools have closed in the last decade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average # of Alumni</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # of Graduates</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parameter</td>
<td>1998 Study</td>
<td>2008 Study</td>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni That Become Nationally Certified</td>
<td>≤20%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions That Solely Focus On Homeopathic Training</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government Recognition</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Age of Homeopathic Student</td>
<td>49 years old</td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd and 3rd careers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## US vs. European Homeopathic Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>North American Data</th>
<th>European Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offer Medical Education as Part of the Program</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Number of Students Enrolled Per Course</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Number of Students Graduating</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Time vs. Full Time</td>
<td>100% Part Time</td>
<td>92.5% Part Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Length</td>
<td>30 months</td>
<td>42 Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Teaching Hours</td>
<td>550 Homeopathic Hours</td>
<td>977 Hours (555 for homeopathy only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Training Hours</td>
<td>200 Hours</td>
<td>210 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses That Offer Medical Training</td>
<td>Not studied</td>
<td>334 Hours of Medical Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Accredited or Recognized</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>8.25 Years</td>
<td>13 Years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What proportion of graduating students go on to practice?
Practice Rates for Alumni after Two Years

- Constitutional Practice
- Acute Care Practice
- No Practice
**Educational Recommendations**

1. Homeopathic schools need to do a better job teaching homeopathic remedy preparation.
2. Homeopathic schools need better training in business and marketing skills.
3. Homeopathic schools need to do a better job educating their students about the economics of practice.
4. We need more homeopathic schools in the central regions of the United States.
5. We need more homeopathic teachers from the central regions of the United States.
6. Homeopathic schools need to find ways to attract younger students.
7. Homeopathic schools need to find ways to attract more men.
Educational Recommendations

8. Homeopathic schools need to find ways to attract more ethnically diverse students.

9. Homeopathic schools need to do a better job in attracting homeopathic students as their first career.

10. Homeopathic schools need to find ways to better attract DC’s and PA’s.

11. Further research needs to be done comparing the results of this survey to other alternative medicine fields within the United States.

12. Further research needs to be done comparing the results of this survey to international homeopathic studies.

13. Homeopathic schools should seek out methods to improve affordability for its students.
Educational Recommendations

14. School should provide more technology support for their faculty and students.

15. There is a need for better teacher training and support, especially for new faculty.

16. There is a need for better support for School Directors.

17. School directors need to be better paid for their work.

18. The homeopathic community needs to work together to find ways of expanding the legal practice of homeopathy. Students need to feel that they can legally practice after graduation and are supported by a strong profession.

19. Schools need to do a better job of mentoring students and providing both peer, faculty and administrative support.

20. Homeopathic schools in North America would benefit from better standards and pursuit of accreditation.
Caveats on Data (Bias)

1. Volunteers
2. Comfort level with on-line communications and technology
3. Methods of reaching patients, practitioners, educators
4. Memory based data
5. Heterogeneity of subject population
6. Sample size
7. Confusion of terms (eg. “success”)
Conclusions

1. Homeopathic Medicine is not growing in the United States and has been stagnant over the last ten years.
2. The number of practitioners has remained unchanged in the last ten years.
3. The number of patients engaging in homeopathic medicine has remained unchanged in the last ten years.
4. The number of homeopathic schools and alumni has largely remained unchanged in the last ten years.
5. Most homeopathic school graduates do not end up practicing.
6. Homeopathic schools are not attracting younger students.
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Thank You

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