

Editor Speak

Dear Readers,

Challenges in harmonization of Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia

Pharmacopeia is the book of standards of medicine. The descriptions of preparations of medicines in this book are called monographs. It is a reference work for pharmaceutical drug specifications. The manufacturers are legally bound to follow the standards and methodology given in the Pharmacopeia. In Homeopathy there are seven National Pharmacopeias, published by authoritative agencies. These are:

(i) The German Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia (Homöopathisches Arzneibuch) (GHP). This is the first book on standards of homeopathic medicines, published by Caspari of Leipzig, Germany in 1825 by the name "Homoeopathic and Dispensatorium Fur Artze and Apotheker". This is the first recorded evidence giving the idea of homoeopathic pharmacopoeias for physicians and pharmacists.

(ii) The first edition of British Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia (B. Hom.P.) was published in 1870 by the 'British Homoeopathic Society' London, followed by the publication of 2nd and the 3rd edition in 1876 and 1882 respectively.

(iii) In 1897, the first pharmacopoeia in U.S.A named 'Pharmacopoeia of the American Institute of Homoeopathy' was published by Otis Clop and Son, inc, Agent, Boston, U.S.A.,. The official version is known as Homeopathic Pharmacopeia of the United States (HPUS). The revision 2016 series is now available.

(iv) French Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia (FHP) was published in 1897. New edition of FHP has come out. 320 *Homeopathic preparations are* described in monographs

(v) In India the first pharmacopeia was published by M Bhattacharyya and Co, Calcutta, in 1893, named 'Pharmaceutics Manual'. The current 12th edition was published on 14th Feb, 1980. The Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of India (HPI) is the official book of standards of Homeopathic medicine in terms of Schedule-II of the Indian Drugs & Cosmetic Act, l940 and Rules, l945. The HPI is prepared by the Homeopathic Pharmacopeia Committee (HPC) constituted by the Government. The HPC also preparethe Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeial Codex, a book on drugs having supplementary information for the purpose of further research work and to keep additional information on drug materials. So far, the standards of about 1117 monographs of drugs have been published in 10 Volumes during the period 1971 to 2016.

(vi) The first edition of Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United Mexican States Permanent Commission of the United Mexican States, (Farmacopea Homeopatica Mexicana) was published in 1996, in Spanish language by the POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE NATIONAL.

(vii) Brazilian Health Surveillance Agency, through the Brazilian Pharmacopoeia Commission, relied on the Thematic Technical Committee "HOMEOPATHY", based on internationally disclosed knowledge has prepared the Brazilian Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia (Brz HP) in 1977 in Portuguese language. The 3rd edition was published in 2011.

The countries which do not have an official pharmacopeia use the pharmacopeia of other countries for their reference standards.

Dr. Hahnemann, in 1805 published the results of his observations in "Fragmenta de viribus medica mentorum positivissive in sano corpore humane observatatis." *(Fragmentary Observations relative to the Positive Powers of Medicines on the healthy Human Body)* a book in Latin. In this he explained his findings on the Experimental Pharmacology as he was the first to ascertain the positive effects of drugs on healthy human beings. His scattered records in these writings along with other books such as Organon of Medicine, Materia medica Pura and Chronic Diseases formed the basis of the homoeopathic pharmacopoeias of the future. Though he has not published any monographs of drugs as we could see in the present day pharmacopoeias, in other publications, Dr Hahnemann has given general and special instructions for the preparation of homeopathic medicines.

There are variations in the botanical names, part of the herbs used in the preparation, method of collection, time of collection, etc in different pharmacopoeias. About 70 % of the medicines used in homeopathy is of herbal in origin. The International Conference of Drug Regulatory Authorities (ICDRA) jointly organized by the WHO and the Government of the People's Republic of China on 24–27 June, 2002 addressed this issue and recommended to harmonize the Homeopathic Pharmacopeias. This need to be addressed on priority because it involves the credibility of the medicine and so the existence of homeopathy.

Harmonization of the monographs in Pharmacopeia and laying down a uniform standard for Homeopathic medicine, products, veterinary and Agri care products is an urgent need of the hour. There are pharmacy institutions, post graduate course in Homeopathic pharmacy and large number of manufacturing units. There is a Traditional and Complementary Medicine (TCM) wing in the World Health organization (WHO). Efforts may be made to tap WHO collaboration with governmental institutions to study and make recommendations for harmonizing the pharmacopeial monographs. The major factor for increasing popularity of Homeopathy is the safety and effectiveness of its medicines. Therefore, it is quite necessary to lay down the standard pharmacopeial standards for all the products available in the market in the name of Homeopathic medicine.

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