

Editor Speak

Dear Readers,

Skill Development in Homoeopathy

In the recent times there is lot of discussion on integration of research with education in Homeopathy. There is also lot of talk on skill development in almost all technological areas. The present collegiate curriculum does not provide much scope to nurture the individual skills of the students in class rooms. It has been recognised that the conventional educational methods are creating more literates in their field of specialisation with less skill to meet the growing challenges in the subject. Even the Prime Minister, in 2015 highlighted the need for skill development in almost all walks of life for better utilisation of human resource and even established a Ministry for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. The efforts are to create new vistas of employment due to limitation of present teaching methods to meet the growing demands. The country is enriched with an exploding generation of youth having limited opportunities to select a satisfactory living through the education he obtains after continuous studies of 4 to 5 years forcing everyone to look towards the public sector for a safe employment. This situation makes the goal of the country to become a fast growing economy difficult. Unless innovations are brought in our teaching and training, the pace of growth that is envisioned might be difficult to achieve.

In this context, there is a need to evaluate the Homoeopathy sector in India for its role in contributing to national development. As in the case of any other medical streams, Homoeopathy also has a vibrant education system, research programmes, drug development protocols and health care delivery system. The sector on education has got a regulatory authority and necessary framework, about 236 undergraduate colleges admitting about 15000 talented students, about 40 PG centres admitting about 1200 brilliant doctors, National Institute of Homoeopathy, North Eastern Institute of Homoeopathy as well an All India Institute of Homoeopathy coming up in Delhi. The research sector is enriched with a Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy having 26 units/ institutes conducting/ monitoring intramural and extramural research programmes. The Council has partnership with about 30 teaching institutions for collaborative studies. On the drug development front, there is an apex Pharmacopeia Laboratory, about 383 Drug manufacturing units and Pharmacopeia Commission. In the health care delivery system, the Central Govt established CGHS dispensaries, ESI and Railways have Homeopathic dispensaries as well almost every State Govt has establishes dispensaries and hospitals.

The basic framework in India in all these four sectors of Homoeopathy are enviable in comparison to the country of its origin and other parts of the world where it flourished. This makes the Indian Homoeopaths to be more responsible as well accountable, because it is the general public who is reposing confidence in the pathy they practice and treatment they provide. Taking clue from the current thinking and the call of the Honourable Prime Ministers, strategic modifications need to be brought in the practice of Homoeopathy as to what the public wants from Homoeopathy, within its scientific, philosophical and artistic parameters. The present approach of delivering only what you know and leave the rest to the patients own choice makes Homoeopathy a very narrow medical dictum.

Homeopathy is a goldmine in the treatment approach on today when the biomedical treatment is faced with serious challenges for its safety. It is holistic, safe, and effective as a standalone treatment option or as an

adjunct therapy with other medical streams. To take the system beyond its past to meet the present and futuristic needs, skill development in its treatment approaches may be a necessity. Bone fracture is one such area. In Homoeopathy there are several medicines that help quicker healing. What is lacking is the training on the skill of manipulation to reduce the trauma, placing immobility of the site and managing the agonising pain. Immobilisation of fracture is mostly done by paramedics. Standard treatment protocol of treatment and pain management could be achieved through research. Learning modern orthopaedics and using Homeopathic medicines will be a new area of clinical practice in Homeopathy. This does not mean Homeopaths should embark on areas like compound fractures which may require surgical support, but involving in simple fractures shall make a beginning of skill development to the practitioners.

Same is the case in women's health. Homoeopaths need not become the Obstetrician and Gynaecologist in the modern parlance. However, there are several interventions that are easily possible to support women's health such as using a pessary and giving Homeopathic medicines in uterine prolapse, ante natal care, helping to overcome menopausal problems, hormonal imbalances, female infertility etc. These could be small beginning to expand its scope in the treatment approaches in Homeopathy. On palliative care and infertility, the Government doctors in Kerala such As Dr Vinu has already achieved some laurels. The work of Prof Tapas Kundu et all on Haemophilia, Dr Druba Chakraborty in non healing ulcers, several stalwarts like Dr R P Patel, late Dr P Banerjee, Dr Pankaj Bhatnagar, Dr Sandeep Roy, Dr Jayesh Singhvi, Dr A U Ramakrishnan, Dr Surinimal Sarkar, Dr Feroke Master, Dr Rajan Sankaran etc in cancer care are laudable (the names are only illustrative, there are many more). Few doctors are working on hormonal disorders; few others are working on preventive cardiology etc. We have effective medicine for immature senile cataract, several ENT problems etc. All these areas need to be refined through enhanced skilling for proper diagnosis and non invasive interventions. By this way the scope of Homeopathy in patient care shall get enhanced which is the ultimate goal of education and research.

It is also worth publishing subject specific journals in Homoeopathy on some of the special areas of treatment like Cancer care, Palliative care, Women's health, Podiatry, Cosmetology, Orthopaedics' etc to create more evidences based literature in Homoeopathy.

These are few examples where skill can be brought to enrich the practice. Research should focus on such areas to make excellence in the education. Indian Homoeopaths should take the lead role to expand the scope of Homoeopathic practice. This will provide new opportunity to the young practitioners to be proud about the system they learnt.

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