

Editor Speak

Dear Readers,

Challenges in Homeopathic Education

Recently there was the national conference at Chennai on Decoding Homeopathy. Eminent speakers from pure and applied sciences presented papers on the intricate concepts in homeopathy. Secretary (AYUSH) was the Chief Guest. He highlighted the importance of good medical education for better health,which decide the progress of the country.

There are 439 Medical colleges in Allopathy with about 60,000 admissions in MBBS. In Homeopathy there are 197 colleges with about 13000 admissions in BHMS course. These are apart from the 246 Ayurveda, 46 Unani and 9 Siddha colleges. All these medical colleges are aimed at training practitioners and contributing human resources to Indian health sector. In spite of these, the Indian health system is one of the lowest in the world ranking. It is also important to think why homeopathy is not getting adequate visibility, though its strength are quite unique.

The Ministry of AYUSH is seized with the need to improve the standards and the Central Council of Homeopathy is committed to bring quality in Homeopathic education. India follows an independent education system unlike the western model, where Homeopathy is a medical specialty after completing training in conventional medicine. The Indian experts designed this unique and revolutionary model to maintain distinct identity of the system as it differs in the philosophy and principle with bio medicine. Though the intention was well expressive, but due to inadequacy of experienced educationists to carry forward innovations, what resulted was mushrooming of parallel institutions with less enthused teachers and poor infrastructure. This is visible from the fact that there has been consistent efforts to reduce the requirements of the Homeopathy Minimum Standards of Education (MSE) Regulations notified in 1983 by CCH. In the pursuit of maintaining status or uniformity with conventional medicine, the course curriculum, text books, teaching hours were imitated, though it was envisioned to maintain independency in the approach on teaching. The arguments put forward by the proponents for such drastic dilution in the MSR has its origin from the people who have conflict of interest in homeopathic education. In some states, there is a competition to open more colleges, without bothering the need for the requirements of qualified personals in that states. Mainly they are using those institutions for exporting qualified quacks to neighboring disciplined states. The National Institute of Homoeopathy, which is supposed to be the nodal center of homeopathic education and training, has not made much impact by becoming a resource center to other institutions. There is a CME scheme to train the teachers and a sizeable amount of funds and energy was spent. However, the result of this exercise has not been seen because the resource persons were not trained to train! They were either experienced practitioners or charismatic speakers. This is added with the apathy of the main professional organizations who had a major say as to what is required for the future of homeopathy. Thus there is an education system, neither motivating the students nor maintaining individual identity. The education system in homeopathy has become redundant with the time. The teaching institutions are mostly producing legally qualified practitioners rather than with professional sagacity.

In spite of tremendous expansion in terms of number of institutions, the general quality of homoeopathic education remains far from satisfaction in creating visionary teachers, innovative researchers and credible leaders to lead the system beyond the boundaries laid by Dr. Hahnemann in early 1800. It could be best said of just producing practitioners who are barely able to practice the traditions of the system.

India claims to be the world leader in terms of resources in Homeopathy.One expert committee report points out that there is not even one institute of National Importance in AYUSH sector, nor any institute that could claim to be a Center of Excellence. Homeopathy is a part of the AYUSH. The main stake holders to bring vibrancy in the system is the Homeopaths themselves. Finding fault on others shall give solace only to indolent. Lack of innovations and enthusiasm to explore the depth on the principles laid down by Hahnemann is mainly preventing the Homeopathy from contributing an important role in the national health system.

Esteemed readers may send their views to bring changes in the system.

Dr. Eswara Das
Editor