

Editor Speak

Dear Readers,

THE SECOND WAVE OF COVID 19 AND SCIENTIFIC MEDICINE

The Covid 19 pandemic continues to be unchallenged during its mutatedmanifestation with high mortality and morbidity. There have been countless deliberations, reviews, advisories and modified treatment protocols on the monstrous virus. Inspite of this the patients continue to be victims and the physicians clueless!

The biomedicinal research approach articulated by the ICMR for its management is totally at variance with the AYUSH medical principles and practice. The biomedicine believes that natural diseases are caused through biological agents, be it an external agent like bacteria or viruses or internal imbalances at biomolecular level and therefore, the treatment is directed to pharmacologically active substances. Whereas, the AYUSH systems believe in holistic concepts and follow certain medical philosophy as well science and art to treat the sick. One such concept is *vitalistic* principle, which advocate that there is a lifeforce that permeate the body and mind to function at an optimal level in health and any imbalances to it causes sickness. The treatment is therefore, directed to bring back the deranged lifeforce to normalcy.

On matters related to Covid prevention and treatment, AYUSH systems have been alienated in the pretext of lack of scientific evidences in viral infections. In that process the AYUSH infrastructure and the qualified medical manpower has been sidelined during the national crisis. This has given an impression that the Government do not have confidence on the competence of AYUSH towards the pandemic. Thus, while doing lip service on promoting AYUSH, the policies swayed towards western puritan biomedical culture, thus missing the opportunity of demonstrating alternate options of pluralistic health care supremacy of India.Providing opportunities based on the strength of different systems and thereby, utilizing its services would have given the true message of India becoming the hub of world pharmacy. Reliance to mere exporting vaccines to few underdeveloped countries lead the above claim a short-lived propaganda.

AYUSH professional bodies and NGOs made several representations and deliberations with *Niti Ayog* and the expert groups on Covid management. They should have given due consideration that India is the only country in the world that uses pluralistic paradigm in health and successfully using traditional practices safely. It is also a fact that the biomedical research protocols in toto can not be imbibed in AYUSH protocols

The fight against Covid19 and its variants is almost 18 months old in India. During this period, we have been witnessing permutation and combination approaches in biomedicine.The Homoeopathic profession was unanimous to claim the space for prevention of the pandemic quoting the historical evidences of other epidemicsand based on the concept of preventive medicine. Based on these, AYUSH issued guidelines to use Ars alb 30 as immune booster. More claims emerged based on individual experiences such as Bryonia, Camphor, Gelsemium, phosphorus, Tuberculinum etc as possible Genus epidemicus. Homeopathic profession and several NGOs took lead role in the distribution of Ars alb. The data analysed by CCRH shows that more than 85 % of people who took this medicine as per their guidelines escaped from the infection. Apart from that, in spite of advisories not to treat positive cases, several Homeopaths used Eupatorium 200, Bryonia 30 etc as medicine when they or their family

got the infection and the recovery is said to be quick and uneventful. The Ministry of AYUSH constituted a different expert group on Covid management, however, here also Homeopathy did not get a rightful direction. The evidence created by professional bodies, CCRH and philanthropic patient groups continue to be in miserably neglected.

Covid 19 has taught us new lessons on the governance of healthcare, treatment approaches on viral infections and self-regulations. The experience shows that several unhealthy practices emerged in this sector. We can't blame any particular institution for all the mess and loss of life. The pertinent question is " Was Covid 19 a horrendous infection as has been portrayed or an infection that could have been managed better with more simple medications".

This pandemic is neither the last viral infection nor the present one seems die down quickly. Basic epidemiology teaches to understand the Host Environment and Agent relationship on causation of diseases. While managing any new infection the sole focus should not be directed to the agent andor its neutralization, but important to give more focus on Host and healthy practices to enhance his immune system. The teaching on susceptibility and immunity in Homeopathic philosophy is more relevant now than any time before.
It is said that during the challenging time we are at our best- our efforts, intelligence, energy and discussions remain heightened. One of the vocal Parliamentarian in the recent past commented that the Health care in covid time has been the unhealthiest one and need immediate revamp.

Lessons learnt in eighteen months is a good to revamp or recast health policies. Though the hand and legs of Homeopathy and Homeopaths were tightly tied up by the policies in this pandemic, it is laudable that the profession made enviable inroads in public health and collated valuable evidences. This should not be allowed to burnt down. It is high time that an impartial body of experts may conduct a systematic study on how the public have used the Homeopathy for prevention and treatment of Covid 19. Simultaneously a clinical audit on the present practices adopted on Covid may also conducted to understand the shortfalls. These will help the posterity to understand the reality of its strength of different therapies and practices. Covid is not the last viral infection that the,mankind may face, nor all the havoc this infection put on mankind and on the economy is far from over. Therefore, such a study becomes much essential to revamp health sector. The credibility of a medical system comes from its ability to contribute something to health care.

In the present health care system, there is enough space to every system to play its role, especially in pandemics of such magnitude. Scientific evidences emerge from experiences and data generation. Swift recovery of the patient is the mission of any physician. At the same time, it should be safe as well. When the therapeutic modalities become more detrimental to life than the disease itself, posterity will call it a barbarian approach. Science support evidences to evolve practices. Deductive inferences also help to emerge new principles. Efforts should be to see Homeopathy emerge as the first choice of medicine in such crisis.

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