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Dra Amarilys de Toledo Cesar

Past Secretary for Pharmacy

Dr. Fruzsina Gabor

Secretary for Pharmacy

Dr. Michel Van Wassenhoven

Secretary for Research

Homeopathic medicine/remedy definition

History of this document:

- Dr A. Alma Rodriguez, President of LUIMO, asked for a discussion within LMHI about the definition of the homeopathic remedy.
- First draft presentation: Ostend, 2008
- Suggestions from Dr. Silvia Waissen Priven, homeopath in São Paulo, Brazil.
- Working group prepared a final draft presented in Los Angeles 2010
- The final draft was accessible for amendments and comments on the LMHI website from May 2010 to 31 August 2010.
- 1 of September 2010 the final document has been finalized.

Introduction:

According to the EU directive 2001/83/EC Art.14 and EU directive 2001/82/EC Art.17 “simplified registration procedure” and EU directive 2001/83/EC Art.16 and EU directive 2001/82/EC Art.19 concerning homeopathic medicinal product for human and veterinary use the definition must take into consideration two elements: the **homeopathic use and the homeopathic nature of the stock/raw material**. A stock/raw material for homeopathic preparation has to be precisely described; the directives are related to the manufacturing methods.

The wording “homeopathic remedy” means that it remediates a situation and the wording “homeopathic medicine” means a well defined/described stock/raw material to be used in homeopathy.

In the LMHI-ECH 2009 document about “Medical Homeopathic Education Standards”, “Homeopathy” is defined as: “a method of medical practice, aimed at improving the level of health of an organism by the administration of proven and succused/triturated medicines, which are individually selected in accordance with the law of similars.”

In order to arrive to a more complete definition for the homeopathic medicine/remedy, 3 aspects must be considered:



A/ The Homeopathic use

The principle of similar and the term “homeopathic” are closely related. The denomination “homeopathic” comes from *homoios* = similar and *pathos* = feelings/symptoms/suffering. Homeopathic healing means healing according to the law of similar. All substances able to alter the state of health of a healthy subject, producing a pathogenesis of specific symptoms, when administrated to an ill living being that manifests similar symptoms to those evidenced in the healthy, work in a homeopathic way, i.e., effecting the reversibility of the morbid process.

All substances belonging to the mineral, animal, human, plant kingdom, chemical compound from synthesis and even from electro-magnetic origins, can be raw material/stock for homeopathic purpose. These substances must demonstrate their power of inciting alterations in the state of health of healthy subjects, exhibiting a pathogenetic pattern, constituted by series of transient symptoms in the physical, psychological and emotional spheres. All symptoms of a particular remedy, collected from provings on many human beings, constitute the *materia medica* of the remedy.

Historically (Kent – Hering) these pathogenetic patterns have been related through:

- a) Poisoning symptoms (known overdose);
- b) Toxic (unknown) exposure symptoms;
- c) Sub-toxic symptoms resulting from substances in which raw material/stock have been diluted and succussed/triturated but still contain sub-toxic concentration of the raw material/stock;
- d) Non toxic symptoms deriving from substances in which the stock have been diluted and succussed/triturated in a scale in which it is already impossible to identify any molecule of the raw material/stock. Nowadays, it becomes to be a common practice to use a 30CH for these provings.

A proving symptom is more accurate when confirmed by at least a second proving and clinically verified in the daily practice. Substances' pathogenesis and clinical verification of these symptoms are recorded in the *Homeopathic Materia Medica*. In *Homeopathic Repertories* symptoms are collected and classified in rubrics.

Another origin of symptoms is the clinical data. In homeopathic treatment, some symptoms that have not been observed and described during the proving on volunteers, can be exhibited and healed. Only when repeatedly confirmed by clinical data it can be linked to a specific homeopathic remedy. Those healed symptoms are indicated as “clinical symptoms” in the books of *Homeopathic Materia Medica*. It is the same for the toxic symptoms and derived symptoms (reactive symptoms arising in sensitive subjects during the administration of medicines).

The well documented homeopathic medicines are the remedies completely studied by repeated provings and clinical verifications of all gathered symptoms.



The traditional homeopathic use is obtained when the totality of the symptoms in an ill living being is covered by the confirmed and verified proving symptoms of one homeopathic medicine.

The principle of similars says that a substance, capable of provoking symptoms in a healthy organism, acts as curative agent in a diseased organism in which the same symptoms are manifested: *similia similibus curentur*, or let likes be cured by likes. As it is mentioned in the *Organon of Hahnemann*, "to cure in a mild, prompt, safe, and durable manner, it is necessary to choose in each case a medicine that will excite an affection similar to that against which it is employed".

B/ The Homeopathic “sources” or “monographs”

Some monographs, also called “sources” (or parts of it) are private properties of pharmacists or companies, but must be validated about quality, reproducibility and safety. A “homeopathic medicine” can obtain legal status by registration/authorization by national authorities. A monograph/source can be published in an officially recognized homeopathic pharmacopoeia and/or must contain a complete description of the raw material/stock and its method of preparation according to the rules of such pharmacopoeias.

The most important homeopathic pharmacopoeias are:

- *European Pharmacopoeia (Ph.Eur.)*
- *Farmacopéia Homeopática Brasileira*
- *Farmacopea Homeopatica de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*
- *Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia of India (H.P.I.)*
- *Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States (HPUS)*
- *Homöopathisches Arzneibuch (HAB) or German Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia (GHP)*
- *Pharmacopée Française or French Pharmacopoeia (PhF)*

The “sources/monographs” used for the preparation of the homeopathic medicines define “homeopathic names”, that may be the scientific name in the case of sources from vegetal or animal kingdom, the Latin name for the ones from mineral origin, or other names found in homeopathic pharmacopoeias. For the legal status the Latin name is always required and can be the scientific name. Traditional names (synonyms) also exist, and then a clear link with the monograph/source is needed.

This accurate and detailed description of a source/monograph is very important. Each proving and written or oral presentation of clinical cases must refer to it. The homeopathic “source/monograph” specifies a defined homeopathic medicine.



C/ The Homeopathic preparation of stocks/raw material

The starting material is the stock/raw material that is dissolved and succussed in pure water, or water with alcohol. The stock/raw material may be also triturated in the first dilutions with lactose up to the first dissolvable dilution. Other vehicles than water, alcohol and lactose are described in some pharmacopoeias.

The number of times and the rate of the dilution and succussion/trituration defines the “potency”, and it is expressed by a number and a letter. The most used scales (or rate of dilution) are Decimal, Centesimal and 50 millesimal. In Decimal (D, X or DH) the serial fractioning is carried out in a scale of 1:10 at each step. In Centesimal (C or CH) the serial fractioning is done in a scale of 1:100 at each step. In 50 millesimal (LM or Q) the serial fractioning is done approximately in a scale of 1:50.000 at each step.

Different methods to potentize a homeopathic medicine exist. The classical Hahnemannian method (CH) was first defined by Hahnemann: in the 5th edition of Hahnemann's *Organon*, dilution 1:100, using separated vials. The dilution is followed by succussions. The same method is proposed to prepare the decimals 1:10 (DH). The Korsakov method is a dilution rate of approximately 1:100, and done in the same vial. The dilution is also followed by succussions. For the Continuous Fluxion (FC) method a continuous dilution/succussion in the same vial is carried out.

The diluted/succussed solutions are usually kept in alcohol 70% except for trituration (lactose) or small saccharose globuli (LM or Q potencies). Alcohol 70% assures a long time of preservation of the stocks, allowing keeping stocks that had or may become rare at disposition.

The homeopathic preparation specifies a defined homeopathic medicine. Belladonna is not a complete definition of a homeopathic remedy. *Atropa belladonna* is the Latin scientific name of the stock/raw material. Belladonna 5CH is a defined homeopathic remedy. Adding the form and size of the bottle or vial gives complete information on the remedy.



CONCLUSION

The definition of the homeopathic remedy or medicine must consider different point of view. We can synthesize this definition in the following sentences:

A homeopathic remedy is prepared from a stock/raw material described in a homeopathic monograph/source, following a homeopathic method and administered to a living being according to the principle of “similia similibus curentur”.

It has a potential to support changes in the state of health of this living being. When such changes indeed happen and lead to an improvement in the state of health/full healing of a disease with recovery of the state of health, homeopathic medicines act as remedies.