

SLOVENIA 2011
Annual Report to the LMHI

Dr Irena Gorišek, National Vice President

Summary of Report

During 2011 the main activities of the Slovenian Homeopathic Society have been aimed towards changing the legal status of homeopathy in our country, trying to achieve that medical doctors could practice homeopathy without losing their licence to practice conventional medicine. The first results were quite encouraging but health care reform was completely stopped due to the fall of government in September 2011. We will have to start the whole process again with the new government in 2012.

Following the approval of the Slovenian Agency for Medicinal Products and Medical Devices at the end of March 2011, homeopathic medicines have finally become available also in Slovenia. We expect that by the end of 2011 the Agency will issue five-year permits for altogether 53 homeopathic medicines in a simplified procedure.

Desktop Guide to Keynotes and Confirmatory Symptoms by Roger Morrison was translated and published in Slovenian language by Dr Miloš Žužek, Secretary of the SHD. This is already a second Materia Medica translated in our language.

LMHI members in 2011: 15

The list of addresses and telephone numbers of homeopathic physicians was submitted to the LMHI Treasurer along with the membership dues on March 27, 2011.

Organization:

Slovensko homeopatsko društvo is the LMHI institutional member and it is only homeopathic medical association in Slovenia.

Slovensko homeopatsko društvo (*Slovenian Homeopathic Society*)

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REPORT

Regulatory status of homeopathy in Slovenia

By the Act of Healing Practices, only medical doctors are allowed to practise homeopathy in Slovenia, however, the practices of conventional and homeopathic medicine are not compatible as medical doctors who wish to practise homeopathy lose their licence to practise conventional medicine.

In June 2008 the Medical Chamber of Slovenia introduced the article in the Medical Doctors Service Act to strictly prohibit medical doctors from practising homeopathy. If they practise it, the Medical Chamber may never issue a first licence or may withdraw the medical doctor's licence either temporarily or permanently and she/he will be struck off from the Register of medical doctors. A fine ranging from € 650 to € 1200 could be imposed on a medical doctor using homeopathy or any other complementary and alternative medicine modalities. All medical doctors and dentists in Slovenia are required to be fully registered with the Medical Chamber of Slovenia and be licensed as independent medical services practitioners in order to work independently. Medical doctors with a licence can only practise conventional medicine and acupuncture, which is the only CAM modality they are permitted to practise.

That's why the main activities of the Slovenian Homeopathic Society (SHD) have been aimed towards changing the legal status of homeopathy. This means amending the Act of Healing Practices introduced in October 2007, some articles of the Medical Doctors Services Act adopted in 2008, and the Health Services Act. The first results were quite encouraging but health care reform was completely stopped due to the fall of government in September 2011. On October 21 President dissolved parliament and called an early general election for 4 December. We will have to start the whole process all over again with the new government in 2012.

Postgraduate basic and advanced homeopathic training

The SHD is offering a three-year postgraduate basic training programme for medical doctors and dentists consisting of 350 hours (200 hours theoretical, 150 hours practical training) according to the ECH Medical Homeopathic Education Standards. We have the status of the ECH accredited teaching centre. Lecturers are well-known homeopathic doctors mostly from Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Slovenia.

Once a year we organise three-day advanced seminar so called Summer School, which is a part of our continuing homeopathic medical education and continuing professional development. The topic of the Summer School 2011 was the Homeopathic Treatment of PTSS and our lecturer was Dr Kees Dam from the Netherlands. In October we organised another two-day advanced seminar the Homeopathic Treatment of Infectious Diseases with Dr Jorgos Kavouras from Germany.

Homeopathic medicines finally available in Slovenia

The Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, which includes homeopathic medicinal products, was transposed into national law, notably the new Medicinal Products Act, adopted in March 2006 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 31/2006, 45/2008) and the Rules on homeopathic medicines for human use, adopted in October 2008 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 94/2008).

The Agency for Medicinal Products and Medical Devices of the Republic of Slovenia issued, for the first time, five-year permits for homeopathic medicines on March 30, 2011. We expect that by the end of 2011 the Agency will issue five-year permits for altogether 53 homeopathic medicines in a simplified procedure.

This was definitely the most important event in 2011, because homeopathic medicines were back in our pharmacies after 66 years and Slovenia was the last EU member state which issued permits for homeopathic medicines.

Publications and magazines

Journal of the Slovenian Homeopathic Society (ISSN 1855-8100) is the only homeopathic medical publication in Slovenia which is published once or twice per year. Next issue will be published in December 2011.

Roger Morrison's book Desktop Guide to Keynotes and Confirmatory Symptoms was translated and published in Slovenian language by Dr Miloš Žužek, Secretary of the SHD. This is already a second Materia Medica translated in our language.

Promotion of homeopathy

Until 31st October 162 articles were published on homeopathy (TV, radio, newspapers, websites, articles, talk shows, interviews, etc.). Two events have triggered wide debate on homeopathy. One was in April because of availability of homeopathic medicines in Slovenian pharmacies and the second was a public reprimand of the Arbitration court of Medical Chamber of Slovenia against medical doctor with licence who was also practising homeopathy published in medical journal Isis in May 2011.

The public opinion and journalists were mostly positive and proposals were made that homeopathy should finally become a part of national healthcare system also in Slovenia. Because Slovenia is the only EU member state in which medical doctors with licence for conventional medicine are not allowed to practice homeopathy. The situation in Slovenia is quite bizarre. Homeopathic medicines are by the Medicinal Products Act regarded as medicines (medicinal products) which may only be sold (issued) in pharmacies by pharmacists with additional knowledge of homeopathy. But medical doctors who are only qualified and authorised to prescribe medicines for use in human medicine are by law not allowed to prescribe homeopathic medicines. Pharmacists (as healthcare workers) may issue homeopathic medicines, but medical doctors (as healthcare workers) are not allowed to prescribe them.

In March 2011 Arbitration court of Medical Chamber of Slovenia had a hearing against medical doctor with licence who was also practising homeopathy. One of our members, a medical doctor nearly lost her licence to practise conventional medicine. She had to promise to the members of the Arbitration court, that she will stop practicing homeopathy and after this promise she only got a public reprimand which was published in medical journal Isis in May. After this event there was a lot of positive writing about homeopathy in our media, and as well a few negative articles. In medical journal Isis some really offensive articles about homeopathy were published but as well positive by medical doctors who themselves are not homeopaths and two letters by German medical doctor and homeopath, who lives and works in Slovenia. One of the most prominent and influential medical doctor, academician, senior advisor for medical education, and professor named homeopathy simply charlatanry, swindle and the homeopathic medical doctors mentally insufficient and amoral in his article in medical journal Isis. His statements provoked heated debate between medical doctors. Once again it was confirmed that only a very small, but very influential group of medical doctors are strongly against homeopathy and that majority of doctors are not against. Editorial board

of the medical journal Isis arbitrarily decided in October to stop debate about homeopathy with no real explanation.

Now we are again and still trying to find a way to protect our rights as homeopathic doctors - to be equal to all the other homeopathic doctors in Europe.

In April we held free lectures about homeopathy for the general public to celebrate the World Homeopathy Awareness Week.

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