

Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation
#025_ANON-58KW-N5SP-N

13 July 2017

Review Secretariat
Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation
Australian Health Department

Dear Professor King, Bill Scott and Jo Watson,

I am strongly opposed to homeopathic medicines being removed from sale in pharmacies and deeply concerned at the motivation behind such a proposal when, clearly, there is a growing market for them.

People who use homeopathics do so because they have found them to be effective.

I have used homeopathic medicines for 26 years. I was introduced to them by a GP who was also a homeopath. My children had been having ear and throat infections increasingly frequently. Previous doctors had prescribed antibiotics, increasingly frequently. It was obvious that this approach was not working and, in fact, negatively affecting my children's natural immunity.

From the very first homeopathic prescription these conditions improved and, by treating new bouts promptly with homeopathic medicine, they resolved quickly with reduced severity and their ear and throat infections ceased all together.

My children, ever since, have enjoyed a resilient immunity, as have I.

I point out here that my children had no expectation or belief around what they were taking so it would be difficult to conclude that their effectiveness was placebo.

I was so impressed with the effectiveness of homeopathics that I took a weekend homeopathic first aid course which I found so fascinating that I ended up studying homeopathy for 5 years. Not to become a practitioner so much as to care for my own and my family's health.

Such sweeping decisions as to remove homeopathics from the market is clearly not made from experience and would be a seriously backward move, not only because it makes something safe and effective unavailable but denies an individual free choice to use them.

Homeopathy has proven its effectiveness for well over 200 years and has been freely used in other parts of the world to this day. It would not have survived for so long, unchanged, if it was not effective. The reason that the use of homeopathy and other natural medicines is growing is purely and simply due to the fact that they work.

Countless pharmaceutical drugs, some of which have had tragic results, have had to be removed from the market or modified due to shocking side effects that only became apparent after being 'tested' on the masses. They should never have been released onto the market because they ignored the Hippocratic oath #1 'Do no harm'. Yet, still, chemists continue to stock medicines that have harmful side effects.

This has never happened with homeopathics. Homeopathy is safe, effective and inexpensive. The use of homeopathy supports the body's natural healing abilities and strengthens the immune system in the process.

Essentially, homeopathy works with the body's natural defences, seeing signs and

symptoms as the system's effort to cure itself. By providing, with the remedies, more of the same, it reinforces those efforts and can bring about cure quickly and completely.

Modern pharmaceutical drugs generally view the symptoms themselves as the disease and treat them rather than the cause of them. So, the 'cure' is superficial and temporary because it only masks the symptom.

Further, it can, over time, cause the disease to go deeper and become more serious. And, even further, can complicate the issue with unwanted side effects. We then have more drugs to treat those, throwing more side effects into the mix and on it goes!

Frankly, I am incensed at the implication in The King Review Interim Report that people are incapable of making informed decisions on their own health care or that of their children.

What kind of world are we heading for if individuals are to be denied this basic right?

There is simply no reason to remove homeopathic medicines.

The only reason I can see is that their existence is seen as a threat to the profitability of the pharmaceutical drug companies. Obscene amounts of money go into the development of modern drugs and so an inexpensive alternative would be a threat to recouping such investments.

What other reason can there be?

Even if homeopathy was a placebo medicine, which only the ignorant would believe, if it works, and is harmless, why should a small body of people have the power to deny it to those who choose to use it?

And clearly, this small body of people do not represent the opinion and growing trend of the Australian community. 70% of Australians choose to use complementary medicine services and products. We are a free society in Australia and it is our right to freedom of choice regarding our healthcare.

What possible 'scientific evidence' has led the King Review to the position that 'the sale of homeopathic products creates risk of harm'? This statement is suspect in itself because anyone who knows anything about homeopathy would be well aware that it just doesn't work that way.

I am deeply concerned that such a move as to remove homeopathics from the market is just a first step to a dire future. What is to become of Traditional Chinese Medicine, proven to be effective for centuries, also inexpensive and properly prescribed, totally safe. What will become of the availability of other health choices?

No, it would be a very bad and foolish move to remove homeopathic medicines from pharmacies. Keep them available to those who choose to use them and allow them to naturally meet demand. In theory, if the people decide they don't work then they will die out naturally, like anything else. However, I, for one, strongly doubt this will happen from their track record to date.

Yours sincerely,

Christina Mulholland