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Issues in homeopathic research and advanced homeopathy

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Background: India has the largest number of practitioners of homeopathy and a very large consumer base for it. Globally, homeopathic research has been directed towards understanding the therapeutic effects of pre-existing drugs in the context of well defined clinical entities. New applications are being discovered for drugs that are already available.

The generation of high quality evidence like randomised controlled trials, outcome assessment and pooling of data in the form of systematic reviews is a cost intensive activity.

Present Stage: There are very few institutions and practitioners with resources or interest in homeopathic research due to absence of incentives and a low impact on practice. Advanced Homeopathy was developed by Prof. Parimal Banerji. The origins of the protocol are in 1918. Advanced Homeopathy is based on observational studies of case records, spread over ninety one years of practice of homeopathy in the same family, across four generations and a patient base of approximately 18 million cases. However, this research has very little protection from intellectual property laws in their current form.

Generating evidence to understand the use of prevalent homeopathic drugs in modern disease should be a pre requisite for any system of medicine to be adopted by a health delivery service.

The Future: Therapeutic regimens like Advanced Homeopathy are able to provide quick, reliable prescription with replicable results. A large number of difficult illnesses are being addressed by practitioners trained in Advanced Homeopathy. As health delivery systems evolve and there is an increase in insurance coverage in countries like India, only those alternative systems with a good evidence base will be practiced for the masses. Structured therapeutic regimens are required to build a good evidence base.

Due to limited protection of intellectual property and a low return on investment for research this base is weak and there is a risk of the homeopathic system being withdrawn from the health services in India in the coming years.

Biography

Kushal Banerjee is a MD in Homeopathy and has MSc in Evidence Based Health Care from the University of Oxford. He has received training at the Harvard Medical School in several areas of clinical medicine. He practices at Dr. Kalyan Banerjee's Clinic, New Delhi, prescribing for over a hundred and fifty patients a day. He is the fourth generation of homeopaths in his family. He has a special interest in creating a good evidence base in homeopathy for drug regimens used to treat difficult clinical conditions at the Clinic, using clinical data spanning over ninety years in the family practice.

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