



## The Research Evidence Base for Homeopathy

### Systematic reviews of randomised controlled trials (RCTs) of homeopathy

- Four of five major comprehensive reviews of RCTs in homeopathy have reached broadly positive conclusions.<sup>1-4</sup> Based on a smaller selection of trials, a fifth review came to a negative conclusion about homeopathy.<sup>5</sup>
- Two major reviews of RCTs of *individualised homeopathy* have reached broadly positive conclusions.<sup>6,7</sup>
- Positive conclusions have been reported in 9 of 35 reviews of RCTs in specific categories of medical condition (the other 26 are largely inconclusive):
  - allergies and upper respiratory tract infections<sup>8,9</sup>
  - childhood diarrhoea<sup>10</sup>
  - post-operative ileus<sup>11</sup>
  - rheumatic diseases<sup>12</sup>
  - seasonal allergic rhinitis<sup>13-15</sup>
  - vertigo<sup>16</sup>

### Placebo-controlled RCTs of homeopathy - the original data

- Up to the end of 2014, the peer-reviewed literature included 153 papers reporting placebo-controlled RCTs, of which 104 have data eligible for our analysis: 43 positive; 5 negative; 56 not statistically conclusive. In addition to the medical conditions above, there is a positive balance of evidence in the following, for example:
  - influenza<sup>17,18</sup>
  - insomnia<sup>19-21</sup>
  - sinusitis<sup>22,23</sup>
- There is evidence from singleton placebo-controlled RCTs in favour of homeopathy for a number of other conditions including: bronchitis,<sup>24</sup> chronic fatigue syndrome,<sup>25</sup> fibromyalgia,<sup>26</sup> premenstrual syndrome.<sup>27</sup>

### Cost effectiveness of homeopathy

- Integration of homeopathy with conventional treatment is associated with better clinical outcomes for similar or lower costs.<sup>28-30</sup>

### Clinical observational studies

- 70.7% of 6,554 follow-up patients, treated at Bristol Homeopathic Hospital for a wide range of chronic medical complaints, reported positive health changes.<sup>31</sup>
- Many patients who attended the Royal London Homeopathic Hospital were able to reduce or stop conventional medication following homeopathic treatment.<sup>32</sup>

### Basic Science

- Laboratory research has obtained evidence that water may retain information about homeopathically-prepared solutes.<sup>33-35</sup>
- Additional laboratory studies have shown that homeopathic dilutions can exert biological effects<sup>e.g. 36-38</sup>

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