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. Based on a smaller selection of trials, a fifth review came to a negative conclusion about homeopathy.
- Two major reviews of RCTs of *individualised homeopathy* have reached broadly positive conclusions.
- 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
  - childhood diarrhoea
  - post-operative ileus
  - rheumatic diseases
  - seasonal allergic rhinitis
  - vertigo

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
  - insomnia
  - sinusitis
- There is evidence from singleton placebo-controlled RCTs in favour of homeopathy for a number of other conditions including: bronchitis, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, premenstrual syndrome.

Cost effectiveness of homeopathy

- Integration of homeopathy with conventional treatment is associated with better clinical outcomes for similar or lower costs.

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.
- Many patients who attended the Royal London Homeopathic Hospital were able to reduce or stop conventional medication following homeopathic treatment.

Basic Science

- Laboratory research has obtained evidence that water may retain information about homeopathically-prepared solutes.
- Additional laboratory studies have shown that homeopathic dilutions can exert biological effects.
REFERENCES