

Personal Submission to the TGA regarding Homeopathy.

To Whom it may concern

Over 30 years ago, personal experience convinced me of the health benefits of homeopathy. Later, I would select homeopathy as part of a treatment plan for my own family, again with great success. Eventually I would learn and practice Homeopathy myself and run a successful homeopathic practice for over 20 years. The number of patients who have been helped by homeopathy just through my clinic alone would now run into the thousands.

I am a homeopathic clinician. I am not trained in statistics and I cannot explain the science behind this method. I cannot argue trials and conclusions. I must leave that to others. However, I do know that Switzerland, India, Pakistan, Germany and various other countries around the globe, value homeopathy and encourage its practice.

In my clinic, I have patients from all walks of life and many have been referrals by doctors. I never take patients off any prescribed medications and I always encourage patients to work inclusively with other health practitioners.

Homeopathy promotes health and rejuvenates vitality. It can and does work with prescription medicines. It does not interfere with any known medicines. Why it should be under such constant attack is impossible to understand.

Many people want to add a natural way of healing to their health plan. This is an important choice and people who do make it must be allowed access to products that come from a properly regulated system to make a safe choice.

Disallowing this group of people, whose numbers are significant, access to alternative medicines like homeopathy will lead to nothing but suspicion and discontent. Considering that the majority of people who use homeopathy never use homeopathy alone but in conjunction with conventional medicine, I don't understand why homeopathy is under this sort of attack, particularly when to the alternative medical community there is everything to lose and nothing to gain by making homeopathy inaccessible. To the general community, it probably makes no difference whether they lose access to homeopathy or not because they were never going to try the system anyway, but to the alternative health community, who are still going to search out these remedies regardless of what the TGA decide, access to homeopathy without the feeling they are doing something wrong is important.

I don't understand how here in Australia, where no real research into homeopathic remedies has ever been done, or any open enquiry by listening to homeopathic practitioners has ever been undertaken, a decision can be made regarding community safety and approval. Yet India, where independent research has been done, and the community who uses alternative medicines has been considered rather than disregarded has decided that homeopathy holds an important place in the health and welfare of their country.

Sometimes I hear community safety used as a platform for attacking homeopathy but the reality is most people will stick with what their doctor says and will never try anything more alternative than supermarket vitamins, so safety concerns regarding homeopathic remedies are not an issue. For those who are already convinced about the validity of homeopathy, denying or limiting access to remedies will never be a community service or something that is in their best interest. If safety was really a TGA concern they would ensure that the supply of these remedies came from a recognised source and were prescribed by a trained

practitioner. Anything other than this will be viewed as bias and arrogance then ignored anyway. Currently we live in an age where, thankfully, minority communities are allowed a voice or at least allowed to live the way they choose. I don't understand why a minority community who chooses to look at the subject of health and illness from a different perspective; who do not impose their beliefs on anyone else, are being so ruthlessly bullied and denigrated? Forcing practitioners to source their remedies from unknown providers through banning or limiting access to remedies or removing them completely from a regulatory system is far more dangerous to patients who are going to use these remedies anyway, than it is for the TGA to oversee the quality of homeopathic remedies. If the TGA is serious about the safety of those who are going to continue to use alternative medicines, rather than be a puppet for sceptics and drug companies, then it must adopt option 1 or 2.

Grant Bentley