

## **Editorial for September 2012**

**Dr farokh master**

### **Research Methodology In Homoeopathy**

Research is to discover answers through scientific application of procedures e.g. collecting, analysing and interpreting the data.

The research can be of following types:- Dr. Archana Narang and Dr. Aurora has very beautifully classified the methods into following titles.

Applied Research – This is carried out to find solution or remedies to a particular disease.

Fundamental Research - It is as the name implies a very basic research, it's usually undertaken for curiosity rather than to find some solutions that we face in our homoeopathic clinical practice.

Exploratory Research - It is the research we undertake to gain knowledge about the disease or the drug we don't know at all, here the intension is to bring in new suggestion and idea. This kind of research is key point to our trials regarding the action of remedies onto various systems in our body and diseases.

Historical Research - It is the study of past case history and other information sources, with an intension to find the origin and

development of a phenomenon/disease/remedy and to discover the trends in the past, in order to understand the present and to anticipate the future.

**Descriptive Research** - It is done to portray accurately the characteristics of a particular individual, situation or a group –i.e., drug pictures, disease pictures, individualized case studies, and research regarding group studies.

**Diagnostic Research** - It is also called clinical research which aims at identifying the solutions e.g. role of glonine in benign hypertension or role of Pulsatilla on ovulation.

**Experimental Research** – It is designed to assess the effect of one particular variable on a phenomenon by keeping the other variables constant or controlled. It is done to test a hypothesis of a causal relationship between variables – Hypothesis-Testing Research, i.e., clinical trials of (new or old) drugs on conditions which were not appeared during drug proving but were benefitted in therapeutics, for example action of certain remedies on cancers.

- One-time Research – Research confined to a single time period.
- Longitudinal Research – Research carried on over several time periods.

The need of the hour according to me is

Clinical research: or "Evidence based medicine" is propagated through clinical research everywhere in the world, what is important is to select a best protocol, in my clinic at Bombay I use Karnofsky performance status scale definitions rating criteria along with European Organization for research and treatment of cancer QLQ-C 30, The protocols used by international agencies like WHO OR ICMR should always be tried first. Also one should include lots of experts from other system to evaluate our results and methods. The role of bio statistician can never be ignored in a best clinical trial. The aim of the clinical research process is to gather scientific data at one place and to support & propagate Homoeopathy as evidence based science.

Clinical verification:- Here one must do clinical drug proving from different age group, different sex, different occupation, different culture and compare the symptoms and signs that come out, I have been now engaged in this field for more than two decades proving snake remedies with the same idea.

Drug standardization: The drug standardization is conducted to ensure quality, genuiness, and authenticity of raw drugs and to evaluate the safety and efficacy of drugs as favorable results cannot be expected from the remedies until they are of good quality. Refer aphorism 122 it tells everything in this matter.

Here like allopathic drug companies we as a homoeopath should study the physiology, the metabolic pathways, the neuroendocrine mechanisms, the effects on neuromuscular system and all other systems including immunological system.

Homoeopathic pathogenetic trials (HPTs): commonly known as Drug Proving is the need of the hour. Even though the method has not changed much after Hahnemann yet Dr Jeremy Sherr's book on drug proving methodologies is very useful.

All practicing Homoeopaths can contribute to the research in homoeopathy by contributing cases from their consulting rooms, this will help us to write down most reliable indications of our remedies, next area is repertory verification, if we can do this much I think it's enough for the present.

Let's see two examples which I love to share with you, the following experiments shows that how beautifully homoeopathy works.

*Paulo Bellavite, MD, and a group at the University of Verona (Italy) wrote an excellent review of clinical research in homeopathy in which they concluded:*

*"Overall, the literature concerning a total of 83 original studies suggests that homeopathy may have significant effects in some conditions, e.g. Galphimia glauca (low homeopathic dilutions/dynamizations) in allergic oculorhinitis, Anas barbariae (high homeopathic dilution/dynamization) in influenza-like syndromes, classical individualised homeopathy in otitis, in allergic complaints and in fibromyalgia, and a few low-potency homeopathic complexes in sinusitis, rhinoconjunctivitis, arthritis. The*

*evidence for individualised homeopathic therapy in the field of upper respiratory tract infections and for homeopathic immunotherapy in respiratory allergies is more conflicting. Pragmatic equivalence trials suggest that, in primary care, homeopathic treatment is not inferior to conventional treatment. A larger number of observational studies and of clinical trials -- conducted in a methodologically correct manner without altering the treatment setting-- are needed before sure conclusions concerning the application of homeopathy for specific diseases can be drawn.” (Bellavite, Marzotto, Chirumbolo, 2011)*

### ***Autism and the Autism Spectrum***

*In 2011 an outcomes based study reported the results of treating 123 children with autism who underwent homeopathic treatment between from 1998 to 2009 (Bravalia, 2011).*

*Treatment effectiveness was determined by the ATEC (Autism Treatment Evaluation Check-list) scoring system, an internationally recognized scoring system to measure changes in autistic symptoms after any treatment. The ATEC has four subsets that measure a range of symptom scores for the following categories: communication, sociability, sensory problems, and health and behavior.*

*Because ATEC is a system of evaluating the progress of different subsets of autistic children, they found groups of remedies that were valuable for autistic children with sensory problems (touch, sound, smell, vision); kinetic problems (hyperactive, aggressive, destructive, self-injurious, and violent behaviors); regressive problems (involuntary stool or*

*urination and inappropriate sexual symptoms); problematic affects or moods; intense fears (dark, thunderstorms, ghosts, downward motion, being alone, crowds, heights, etc.); those with autistic savant abilities; and strong causation in the child's history for the onset of autism (for example: the autistic symptoms began after an acute illness, vaccination, use of suppressive medications, or after an acute emotional trauma).*

*The results of the study were promising. ATEC scores were assessed six months prior to treatment, at baseline when beginning treatment, and were then repeated every three months up to one year after onset of homeopathic treatment. The study had a good cross section of children of various age groups, both genders, and a cross section of children suffering from mild, moderate, and severe autism.*

*Changes in the ATEC scores were statistically significant with an average ATEC score improvement of 19.72 points ( $p$  value  $< 0.05$ ). The ATEC scores improved almost 34% in the first three months and by 60% by six months into treatment. The quick change in symptoms within the first three months of treatment suggests a strong positive effect of the homeopathic treatment.*

*Autistic Hyperactivity Scores (AHS), which measures autistic hyperactivity symptoms such as restlessness, spinning, object fixation, fidgety, etc. in a range from 0 to 59, improved significantly after homeopathic treatment from a score of 36 to 14.3 ( $p$  value  $< 0.05$ ).*

*Most impressive was the observation nine children had complete reversal of their Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS) score below the 30 level, which is in the neurotypical, non-autistic range after only one year of homeopathic treatment.*

*Thirty-two of the children in the study were in a subgroup that was analyzed because they had very pronounced sensory problems at onset of the study. Their ATEC scores began at 73.68 at the time of starting homeopathic treatment and were reduced to 55.74 after 12 months of treatment, and continued to reduce further to 46.41 after 18 months of treatment. This significant 43% reduction in symptoms shows that homeopathy can be very effective for treating sensory integration problems in children with autism.*

*Of interest to practicing homeopaths, the study showed that a third of the children needed sequentially different changes in homeopathic remedies over time as their pattern of symptoms changed. This observation is commonly seen in homeopathic clinical practice with patient experiencing long-standing chronic illness like autism where several different homeopathic prescriptions over time are needed as the main problems change.*

*Bravalia, P. Autism Spectrum Disorder: Holistic Homeopathy. Homeopathic Links Spring 2011, Vol. 24: pp. 31-38.*