

Homeopathy Exposed — Again!

**No matter how many times
it is knocked down, it still
bounces back —
unfortunately**

Australian Skeptics has long regarded homeopathy as little more than outdated quackery. (A visit to www.homeowatch.org will give a comprehensive explanation of this so-called medicine.)

In 2002, Skeptic, Cheryl Freeman exposed the fraudulent sale of fake ‘vaccines’ for Meningococcal disease, Hepatitis B and Influenza. These homeopathic vaccines were available via the internet or phone orders from Gentle Heal Pty Ltd, of Seven Hills, NSW and Newton’s Pharmacy, York St, Sydney. Cheryl’s actions led to a ban on the vaccines and Gentle Heal went on to win the 2002 Bend Spoon Award. (see *the Skeptic* 22:3 and :4) Have things changed in the last three years?

The Sydney launch of ‘World Homeopathy Awareness Week’, April 10-16, took place at Circular Quay. Having an interest in this topic, I attended to see what was going on — four information booths, some live music, a few people milling around and not much else. I was handed a flyer about the wonders of homeopathy which said in part:

Did you know? That homeopathy can achieve ‘impossible cures’? Eg: a boy cured from autism ... homeopathy can work faster than antibiotics ... homeopathy can treat viruses like measles, flu and herpes?

The only real information it contained was that The Australian Homeopathic Association Inc (AHA) planned to have a booth at the forthcoming Parents, Babies & Childrens

Expo at Homebush Olympic Park. If these people think that homeopathy can cure autism, which is absurd, what would they be telling parents at this Expo?

I had my suspicions, which were confirmed later that week when Peter Bowditch and I attended the Expo. At the AHA booth, we approached an attendant:

Can you use homeopathy to vaccinate babies against polio, mumps and other diseases?

Oh indeed yes! Homeopathy can vaccinate your baby against any disease and it’s completely safe.

My fears confirmed, we moved to another attendant:

We’ve just been told that you can use homeopathy to vaccinate babies. I never knew this.

Her reply was instructive:

Well, we have to be careful what we say, you know ... but yes, homeopathy is a far better way to vaccinate babies and is much safer than what the government is doing. Those vaccinations actually cause diseases!

More conversation with the pair reinforced this view with further warnings about a global conspiracy by the pharmaceutical companies against alternative medicine.

Letting the cat out of the bag

Representatives of The Australian Homeopathic Association Inc have publicly stated, at a Parents, Babies & Childrens Expo, that homeopathic



Richard Saunders, an independent video producer and designer of the Great Skeptic CDs, is the Immediate Past President of NSW Skeptics

vaccines are a valid way to immunise babies, and that parents should not use conventional vaccines. This is like saying that parents should take down their pool fence and replace it with a line on the ground drawn with chalk. With the hall full with thousands of visitors, milling around over the three days of the Expo, we can only wonder how many parents were duped by this disgraceful advise from people posing as health care experts.

Homeopaths were not the only exhibitors to give us cause for concern. Entering the Expo, we were confronted with the alarming sight of babies and toddlers undergoing chiropractic adjustments. This stand also had brochures recommending against vaccinations, pointing out a supposed link to cot-death. When quizzed, one of the chiropractors said she would recommend homeopathic vaccinations over conventional ones.

During our visit, we resisted the temptation to take the homeopaths and chiropractors to task as this would not have proofed productive on the day. It was more important for us to see first-hand what was going on and give these people enough rope. However we made sure that representatives of valid medical institutions, also exhibiting at the Expo, were made aware of the actions of their fellow exhibitors. The reps from Children's Hospital at Westmead were particularly horrified. Also, on the way out, Peter and I made our concerns known to the organizers of the Expo who seemed to be disturbed at our findings.

I must say that the Expo itself, apart from the quackery, was a truly



Homeopathy Awareness Week launch at Circular Quay

else could they possibly defend their actions? I suspect they think there is nothing that cannot be prevented or cured by homeopathy. To them, it is simply the best health care system there is and nothing could convince them otherwise. A real case of being totally closed minded.

Following our exposure of the conduct of The Australian Homeopathic Association Inc, Australian Skeptics issued a press

wonderful affair and I would recommend it to any parent. There were certainly enough reps from valid medical institutions and other companies to make it worth while.

I have no reason to suppose that the representatives of the Homeopathic Association, both of whom would probably regard themselves as qualified homeopaths, do not believe in the advice they were giving. How

release, which resulted in a number of interviews on ABC Radio stations, and a warning to parents. So far AHA has made no comment on the matter. Readers are invited to read our press release and other information relating to this report by visiting Australian Skeptics web site. www.skeptics.com.au



Table showing the volume of water required to make up various homeopathic dilutions

One cc (1/4 teaspoon) in	Cubic water container of side dimension-	homeopathic dilution
1000 cc	10 cm.	3X
1,000,000 cc	1 metre	3C
10 ¹² cc	100 metres	6C
10 ¹⁸ cc	10 kilometres	9C
10 ²⁴ cc	1,000 kilometres	12C
10 ³⁰ cc	100,000 Km.	15C

Note-

The more common homeopathic dilution of 30C would require a cubic vessel with a side of 100 light years, one light year being equivalent to 10¹³ Kilometres.

Our thanks to Skeptic David Hellstrom for this chart