

Kenya School for Integrated Medicine

Analysis of homeopathic clinical practice from community clinics in Kwale county, Kenya

by Richard Pitt



Richard Pitt originally trained and practised homeopathy in the UK. He lived for 20 years in the USA and was Director of the Pacific Academy of Homeopathy in San Francisco for 12 years. He was Editor of the journal, *The California Homeopath* for 10 years and is author of four homeopathic books, including *The Natural Medicine Guide for Travel and Home* (thenaturalmedicineguide.com) and *Comparative Materia Medica* (comparativemateriamedica.com).

He lived for most of the last 10 years in Africa and for the last five years was Educational Director of the Kenya School for Integrated Medicine, Kenya, working on a five-year European Union project.

In the last year, he has been active in writing about COVID-19 at covidwatching.org and has just revised his book, *Essential Natural Health Guide* to include information on COVID-19.

KSIM has been offering homeopathic clinics in rural parts of Kwale county for many years. The European Union project offered the opportunity to expand these clinical programmes to more communities. Over the last four years 18 different clinics, including four fixed permanent clinics, were established in the county offering homeopathic and nutritional support. These clinics were mostly held in villages, working alongside Community Health Volunteers and village elders. Patients were either seen in buildings, or sitting under trees. Community Health Units (CUs) are part of a national Community Health Strategy in Kenya. Ten community volunteers per unit were trained to perform public health activities on behalf of the Ministry of Health in Kwale County.

This research, which is part of a European Union supported project, *Supporting the Kwale County Government through the Provision of Integrated Medicine*, analyses clinical outcomes in a number of homeopathic medical clinics run by the Kenya School for Integrated Medicine (KSIM) in Kwale County, Kenya, between 2015 and 2019. This five-year project involved a partnership between the 4Kenya Trust and the main benefactor, the Ministry of Health, Kwale County. The project supported the national Community Health Strategy in Kenya, with a focus in Kwale County, and part of the project involved offering homeopathic health-care in rural settings in the county.

Documentation of clinical outcomes in the clinics were established to provide evidence of the efficacy and possible relevance of homeopathic medicine as part of a developing healthcare system in

Kenya. Supportive evidence was to show how homeopathy can be applied successfully for a wide variety of acute and chronic conditions. Research was carried out by the 4Kenya homeopathic team under the supervision of Richard Pitt. The Swaziland Homeopathy Project provided the Access database.

The project aimed to improve health-seeking behaviour and explore obstacles to healthcare. This included the challenges of accessing healthcare in rural communities and encouraging a broad approach to healthcare, including increasing choices and opportunities. In so doing, it was hoped that outcomes from the clinical work would show evidence that an integrated approach to healthcare would improve health outcomes. It was also hoped it would show evidence of the efficacy of homeopathic treatment for a wide range of conditions seen in the community. The CUs

▷ allowed us to access these communities and provide healthcare services.

Therefore, the goals of this research were to show the following:

- 1 The overall efficacy of homeopathy when treating the people of Kwale County
- 2 The types of conditions seen and remedies given for certain conditions
- 3 An analysis of the quality of comparative improvement for a wide range of conditions
- 4 The specific effect of homeopathic treatment in four distinct regions of the county
- 5 The outcomes of homeopathic treatment in each clinic seen.

Analytical tools used

During the project, 3999 patient records were entered into an Access database and analysed according to the Visual Analogue Scale (VAS)

which analyses changes in specific conditions / symptoms, and a Karnofsky score – a common measure that evaluates overall wellbeing and capacity for supporting a functional lifestyle. The Karnofsky score, which measures the degree of functionality and self-reliance, has two elements, a patient-based evaluation and a practitioner evaluation. The range is between 0 (death) and 100 (health), and most people measure between 50-80. It was often difficult for us to get an accurate patient-based Karnofsky evaluation, given language and cultural challenges, and assessing improvement was not always easy for people to evaluate. Therefore, practitioner and patient Karnofsky scores tended to be the same. We saw many more patients but could not effectively analyse them, as patients tend not to return for follow-ups. Working in rural clinics

which also function as student clinical internships create other practical challenges in data collection and management. However, we collected enough cases to be able to measure clinical outcomes.

This method of evaluation has been used effectively in the Swaziland Homeopathy Project (<http://www.kbraunweb.com/homeopathyproject/story.asp>), where over 10,000 patients were evaluated over time to analyse the clinical efficacy of homeopathic treatment. Also, it was felt that this method of clinical outcome analysis is a useful and comparatively simple way to evaluate clinical outcomes. This analytical measurement is also easier than using the popular Measure Your Medical Outcome Profile (MYMOP – <http://www.makingcasescount.org/mymop>) which requires more subjective analysis, and is hard to do in the clinical circumstances we were working in.

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Geographical area covered

Kwale County is one of the smaller counties in Kenya, situated on the Indian Ocean and bordering Tanzania in the south. To the north it borders Mombasa County and the City of Mombasa, Kenya's second largest city. It is predominantly a Muslim community, consistent with the coastal region of Kenya but with a significant Christian population as well. A number of tribes are based there, the most common being the Digo and Camber. However, given the tourist area of the county, around Diani Beach, it draws a more diverse population from all over the county.

The project was established in three sub-counties of Kwale County – Matuga, Msambweni and Kinango. 24 Community Units were established in the three sub-counties. With the exception of fixed clinics, most clinics were established in connection with a

community unit. Larger clinics required more than one homeopath. Some clinics were rotated to provide opportunities to visit other areas or if the numbers visiting the clinic declined. All groups, tribes and religions in the coastal area were reached and clinics were situated in very different terrains, from

Marie Magré, the founder of the Kenya School for Integrated Medicine with UK doctors from the Faculty of Homeopathy at student graduation

the arid and more remote parts of Kinango sub-county to the more lush coastal areas in Msambweni sub-county.

Results

The results (*see charts on pages 31, 32, 34*) of this research were broken down into various component parts including geographical location, conditions seen, homeopathic treatment used and overall improvement scores.

It was a challenge for the clinics to be able to monitor the outcomes, which required seeing patients for follow-ups. Most clinics were visited on a monthly basis and, although patients were encouraged to return to the clinics for follow-ups, it is common in these situations for patients only to come when feeling sick or no better. If they feel better, they simply don't come – often, for basic practical and economic reasons, they see no need to return ▸

The project aimed to improve health-seeking behaviour and explore obstacles to healthcare

▷ if they are better. For our purposes of analysis, this makes it challenging to see the real benefits of the treatment given. Therefore, of approximately 4000 records entered into the database, follow-ups were only seen in about 25% of cases. Therefore, analysis of the outcomes of treatment was achieved in these 25% of cases but other data was analysed, including the types of cases seen in different geographical areas of the county.

Categorisation of conditions

In order to facilitate analysis, 36 broad conditions were defined (*see table on page 32*). Each case was allocated one of these conditions in order to create a broad classification of what types of conditions were seen. Then, in each case, more specific symptoms were identified, including more specific pathologies seen, so each case could be broken down further for more detailed clinical analysis.

Conclusions and summary

Overall, when looking at the main conditions seen, we saw an average of 68% improvement in the conditions. Of the 5% where an aggravation was found, it was not documented what percentage of

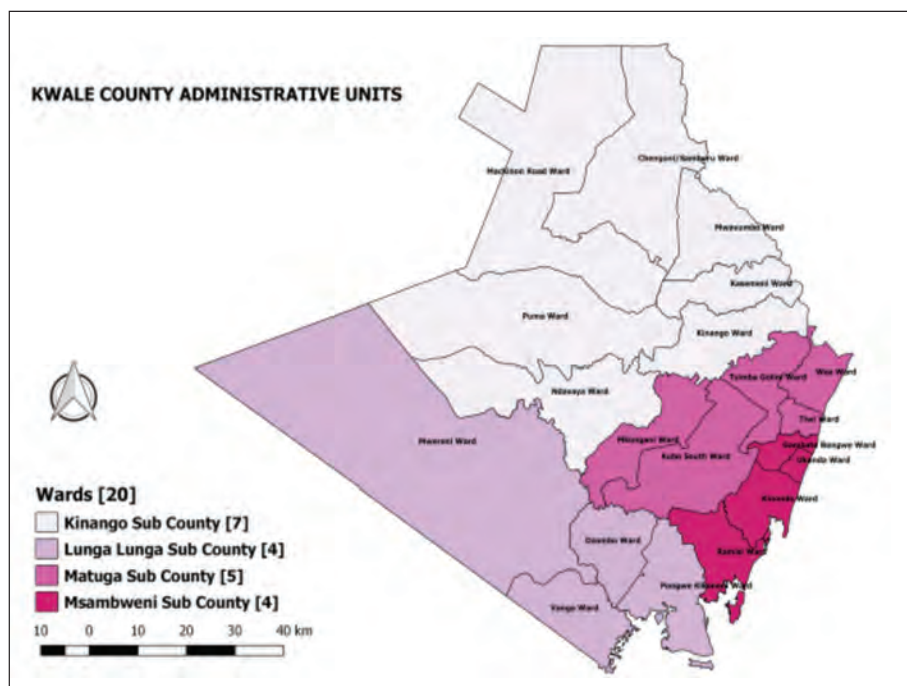


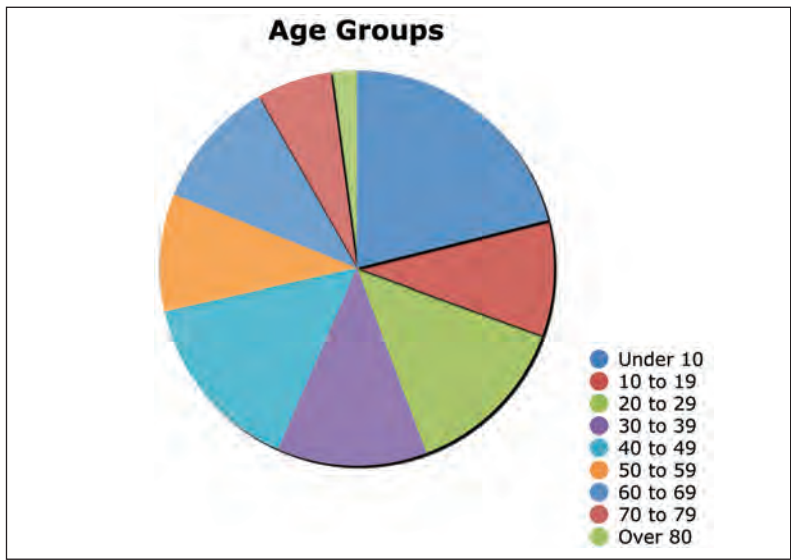
those subsequently improved. In homeopathy, as we know, most attention is given to the characteristic symptoms for each person, but giving a broad categorisation of conditions allows for a more objective analysis and measurement within a more diagnostic framework. A breakdown of the following conditions gives more perspective on the

Homeopathic students in class

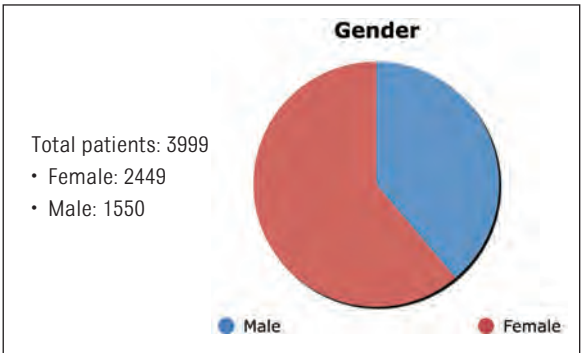
types of conditions seen:

- 1 **Back conditions:** This includes acute and chronic back problems, usually pain and stiffness. Diagnostically it can include osteoarthritis, lumbago, sciatica and muscular tension in the back, often as a result of working habits, often in people (mostly women) who work in the fields, carrying heavy objects and, through getting older, back pain becomes a common condition. The benefits seen in this condition were in the range of 58%.
- 2 **Chest conditions:** This relates mostly to asthma and chronic bronchitis. (Pneumonia is not treated much as it is usually more acute and requires immediate medical intervention.) Chronic chest conditions, including asthma, are common in Kenya and much of Africa. Conventional treatment for asthma is available but tends to be taken only on an as-needed basis. Also, it is not curative. Homeopathy can be an effective intervention for asthma as well as acute and chronic bronchitic conditions. Asthma in children





Students on an outreach clinic at a local prison



may also be fatal. Benefits seen here were in the range of 73%.

3 **Developmental issues:** This is a broad condition that relates to the challenges of childhood development. In particular it relates to children who are late learning to walk or talk, or have mental challenges or congenital problems which can lead to conditions like cerebral palsy. In this case it also

includes convulsions in children which can seriously affect children's development. Given the seriousness of these conditions and the fact that any treatment can only improve some cases to some extent, an improvement of 48% was seen here.

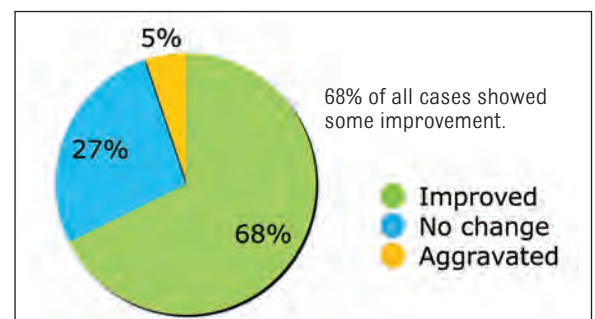
4 **Diabetes:** This is a common and growing issue in much of Africa, including Kenya. Most people already have

It was a challenge for the clinics to be able to monitor the outcomes

▷ The following 36 main conditions were classified according to a broad spectrum of similar conditions:

1	Abdomen / rectum conditions (pain, inflammation, intestines, spleen, hernia, constipation, worms)
2	Accidents / trauma /surgery (injuries)
3	Anger / irritability
4	Anxiety / fears (dark, ghosts, alone, dogs, snakes, animals)
5	Back conditions / neck (acute and chronic pains)
6	Bladder and kidney conditions (inflammation, stones, urinary issues)
7	Blood conditions / BP (anaemia, haemorrhages, hypertension)
8	Bone conditions (pains, inflammation, caries)
9	Cancer / tumours
10	Chest conditions (bronchitis, coughs, pneumonia, asthma, respiration, allergies)
11	Development issues children (autism, cerebral palsy, walking and / or talking late, teething)
12	Diarrhoea / stool (acute and chronic; types of stool – fatty, lienteric, mucus)
13	Diabetes
14	Ear conditions (pain, inflammation, hearing loss, acute)
15	Eye conditions (pain, inflammation, vision)
16	Fevers / flu (malaria, typhoid, chikungunya, dengue, schistosomiasis (bilharzia), filariasis, childhood diseases)
17	Genitalia female / breasts (cysts, tumours, discharge / leucorrhoea, eruptions, inflammation)
18	Genitalia male / prostate (eruptions, hernia, inflammation, swelling)
19	Head conditions (acute and chronic pains, vertigo)
20	Heart conditions (pains, palpitations)
21	Joints / muscles / arthritis (osteo/rheumatoid, gout, rheumatism, swelling, stiffness, cramps, contractions, burning)
22	Liver conditions (hepatitis A,B,C, cirrhosis, gallbladder)
23	Menstrual / hormonal issues (painful, late, profuse; menopause, miscarriage, pregnancy)
24	Mental conditions (insanity, mental weakness, shock, memory)
25	Mouth / teeth / jaw conditions (tongue, lips, gums, glands – pain, burning, salivation)
26	Neurological conditions – convulsions, epilepsy, paralysis (hemiplegia, paraplegia), numbness, trembling, incoordination, stumbling, MS, Parkinson's
27	Nose / sinus / colds / allergies
28	Sadness / grief / shock / bad news
29	Skin conditions / nails (rashes, eruptions, eczema, warts, shingles, psoriasis, perspiration, scars, keloids, allergies, wounds, swelling)
30	Sleep issues (insomnia, sleepiness, dreams)
31	Sterility / infertility / sexual issues (impotence, pain during coition, weak erections)
32	Stomach / digestion / alimentary system conditions (pain, ulcers, nausea, vomiting, indigestion, heartburn, mouth issues, thirst)
33	Stroke
34	Throat / larynx / trachea conditions / voice (tonsils, cough)
35	Thyroid conditions / glands (goitre, hyper / hypo, lymphatic glands)
36	Weakness / tiredness (general or of part)

Based on the Karnofsky score analysis of both practitioner and patient and based on all cases and follow-ups seen, the following analysis was made:



a diagnosis, and are taking conventional medication. However, they often take the medicines sporadically. Some people present with symptoms while others have no apparent symptoms, but have been diagnosed with conventional testing. It can be challenging to evaluate what has changed, as testing was generally not done in our mobile clinics. However, our figures show that 82% experienced some improvement in their overall wellbeing after taking the remedies.

- 5 **Female genitalia:** This relates to all issues except menstrual concerns which are classified separately. The types of conditions can be broad, from discharge to cysts and tumours to inflammation. Overall, improvement was seen in 72% of cases.
- 6 **Head conditions:** This relates predominantly to chronic headaches without any other pathology attached, such as hypertension. Conventional treatment involves mostly analgesics; therefore homeopathy is sought after in such conditions and shows a good record of improvement. 74% experienced some improvement.
- 7 **Hypertension:** This is a serious and growing condition. There may be no symptoms, the only evidence being blood pressure tests. In other cases, there may be symptoms such as congestive headaches, throbbing in blood vessels, and heart and respiratory distress. Conventional treatment

Karnofsky Performance Status Scale

The Karnofsky Performance Scale Index is an assessment tool for functional impairment. It can be used to compare effectiveness of different therapies and to assess the prognosis in individual patients. In most serious illnesses, the lower the Karnofsky score, the worse the likelihood of survival. (<https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/2172510-overview>)

is effective, yet many only take it sporadically. In the cases seen, around 74% experienced relief in their condition, which was also verified through blood pressure measurements.

- 8 **Joints / muscles / arthritis:** These are common conditions with many people, especially in middle and old age. It can be osteoarthritis of single joints or more broad rheumatoid arthritis, and also more general weariness and aching of the body. Analgesics only give temporary relief and other treatments are generally not given. In these cases, there was improvement in around 65% of cases seen.
- 9 **Neurological:** This relates predominantly to convulsions seen in children in one school that supports children with serious physical and mental challenges. Some of their conditions could not be changed, such as consequences of cerebral palsy but, in many cases, convulsions significantly improved from treatment, to the level of 67%.
- 10 **Skin conditions:** These are common, especially in children with eczema but also in adults. Homeopathy has a positive effect in many skin conditions, and here improvement was seen in 71% of cases.
- 11 **Stomach / digestion:** Many people suffer from chronic indigestion and even stomach ulcers. Helicobacter Pylori tests are commonly

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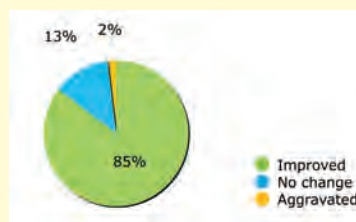


▷ taken, although it is questionable if the above mentioned are the primary cause in some cases. Dietary habits that involve eating early in the morning and nothing until a large meal in the evening, often ugali (maize), can irritate the stomach and lead to indigestion, heartburn, and eventually to stomach ulcers. Conventional treatment is given for stomach ulcers and also antacids for heartburn, but homeopathy can be an effective option here. In this project, there was an improvement in 64% of cases.

Visual Analogue Scale Analysis (VAS)

The following analysis is based on the Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) for symptoms and conditions chosen. Symptoms may be similar to the conditions chosen but can also be more subjective expressions of disease. The percentage improvement here is higher than for the Karnofsky score alone. The VAS score shows individual improvement of certain symptoms, which are measured accordingly. It's possible when doing the scoring that an individual symptom is improved whereas the overall sense of wellbeing (Karnofsky score) is not measured as improved.

Total symptoms follow-up 1322 follow-ups



Main conditions / symptoms, % improvement and number of follow-ups seen:

Condition / symptom	% improvement	Number of follow-ups seen
Abdomen / rectum	82%	108
Back pain	83%	88
Bladder / kidney	83%	42
Chest conditions	89%	213
Eye conditions	84%	32
Fevers / flu	91%	33
Genitalia female	89%	64
Head conditions	87%	116
Joints / muscles / arthritis	86%	113
Neurological	78%	37
Skin conditions / nails	78%	27
Stomach / digestion	85%	135
Weakness / tiredness	85%	33

Visual Analogue Scale (VAS)

The Visual Analogue Scale is a validated, subjective measure for acute and chronic pain. Scores are recorded by making a handwritten mark on a 10-cm line that represents a continuum between 'no pain' and 'worst pain.' (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6132313/>)

Top: Students on our basketball court at the school

Summary

The improvement in individual symptoms / conditions is generally high (*see chart above*). This is a positive finding and reflects the improvement people experienced over a number of cases. The project was not designed to show the overall quality or duration of the improvement, but does identify that enough people with

Comparison by region showing top 10 symptoms reported for each of the four regions where clinics were situated

Top 10 reported symptoms

<i>Msambweni 1</i>		<i>Msambweni 2</i>	
Symptom	No of times reported	Symptom	No of times reported
Headache (acute and chronic, migraine)	379	Cough (not bronchitis or pneumonia)	407
Cough (not bronchitis or pneumonia)	316	Headache (acute and chronic, migraine)	318
Fever	261	Back pain acute	281
Hypertension	252	Joint pain	257
Abdominal pains	176	Delayed development	257
Back pain acute	167	Fever	227
Chest pains	141	Abdominal pains	217
Asthma	127	Hypertension	186
Stomach ulcer	119	Numbness limbs	175
Stomach pain	118	Chest pains	153

<i>Kinango</i>		<i>Matuga</i>	
Symptom	No of times reported	Symptom	No of times reported
Headache (acute and chronic, migraine)	369	Headache (acute and chronic, migraine)	386
Back pain acute	297	Back pain acute	279
Hypertension	210	Cough (not bronchitis or pneumonia)	231
Cough (not bronchitis or pneumonia)	188	Hypertension	226
Chest pains	163	Joint pain	220
Abdominal pains	159	Stomach pain	184
Joint pain	130	Abdominal pains	164
Stomach ulcer	126	Chest pains (not heart; see bronchitis, pneumonia)	143
Constipation	107	Stomach ulcer	141
Vision blurred	103	Legs painful	134

similar symptoms experienced an improvement in their situation.

We saw similar conditions in many clinics. People's lives are often similar, especially when their occupations are predominantly physical. This is particularly so for women, who often work on the farm, carrying water, washing clothes and so on. These physical demands take their toll, leading to

a tendency to acute and chronic back problems and general joint issues, including arthritis. As mentioned, diabetes and hypertension are common among all peoples and genders. It is part of a world-wide epidemic in non-communicable diseases and we saw many people experiencing these conditions. They may take medication for these conditions, but not all can afford

them consistently, and there are many cases where conventional medication is taken sporadically, if at all, depending on the severity of symptoms.

Analysis shows that headaches, back pain (both acute and chronic), joint pains, cough / chest conditions, stomach and abdominal pains are some of the most common conditions and symptoms seen.

▷ Most frequently prescribed remedies

Msambweni 1	
Remedy	No of times prescribed
<i>Natrum muriaticum</i>	299
<i>Arsenicum album</i>	260
<i>Lycopodium</i>	174
<i>Sulphur</i>	121
<i>Rhus tox</i>	114
<i>Phosphorus</i>	71
<i>Sepia</i>	68
<i>Natrum sulph</i>	62

Msambweni 2	
Remedy	No of times prescribed
<i>Natrum muriaticum</i>	237
<i>Lycopodium</i>	224
<i>Rhus tox</i>	204
<i>Arsenicum album</i>	147
<i>Sepia</i>	140
<i>Baryta carbonica</i>	106
<i>Phosphorus</i>	96
<i>Calcarea carbonica</i>	89

Kinango	
Remedy	No. of times prescribed
<i>Natrum muriaticum</i>	299
<i>Arsenicum album</i>	260
<i>Lycopodium</i>	174
<i>Sulphur</i>	121
<i>Rhus tox</i>	114
<i>Phosphorus</i>	71
<i>Sepia</i>	68
<i>Natrum sulph</i>	62
<i>Belladonna</i>	52
<i>Calcarea carbonica</i>	50

Matuga	
Remedy	No. of times prescribed
<i>Natrum muriaticum</i>	220
<i>Rhus tox</i>	210
<i>Lycopodium</i>	181
<i>Arsenicum album</i>	153
<i>Sulphur</i>	133
<i>Sepia</i>	99
<i>Belladonna</i>	95
<i>Pulsatilla</i>	79
<i>Bryonia</i>	64
<i>Arnica</i>	63

The above list shows the most frequent remedies used in all four areas and accurately reflects the most important remedies used in practice. In all four regions, *Natrum muriaticum* is the most common remedy used, which may reflect its relevance for headaches and chronic digestive problems, as well as being a well-known remedy throughout the world. *Arsenicum album*, another important remedy, is indicated in conditions such as chest conditions, especially asthma, acute and chronic stomach conditions (ulcers), and certain skin conditions. *Lycopodium* is indicated in chronic digestive problems, including liver conditions, bladder and kidney conditions and chest conditions. *Sulphur* is one of the most important remedies in skin conditions, as well as many chronic conditions, especially inflammatory states. *Rhus tox* is used in both acute and chronic joint conditions including arthritis and also is an

important skin remedy. *Sepia* is used for many female conditions, including menstrual and hormonal states. *Baryta carb* was seen in the Msambweni 2 area for its use in developmental challenges in young children, for example, when they are late learning to walk and talk and for mental and physical issues such as cerebral palsy. It is also a convulsion remedy. One of our clinics was in a day-care centre for children with serious physical and mental development issues. *Natrum sulph* was seen in the Kinango region and is commonly used for simple diabetes when there are no other indicated symptoms. *Calcarea carbonica* is another important remedy for developmental issues in children and also for chronic joint conditions. *Belladonna* is used more in acute conditions associated with fever and general inflammations such as ear and tonsil infections, and fevers of all sorts. *Phosphorus* is an important remedy for

chest conditions such as asthma, acute and chronic coughs, pneumonia, joint and bone conditions and liver conditions. *Pulsatilla* is a very important remedy for children with infections and colds.

Conclusions

Overall, the evidence shows that homeopathy can be an effective intervention in a wide range of conditions seen in Kwale County communities. Given that most people are relatively poor and are living subsistence lives, often farming and doing other physical labour for a living, the types of conditions seen tend to be somewhat similar, often related to issue of physical labour, basic nutrition and fairly common consequences of ageing such as osteoarthritis.

The rapid increase in non-communicable diseases found in most communities in Africa and large parts of the world are also prevalent here in these communities.



Diabetes and hypertension are common and the use of conventional drugs to treat these conditions tends to be sporadic. It was found that homeopathy was able to help stabilise these conditions. We are not concluding that it can cure them, as both diabetes and hypertension are often chronic and inveterate conditions and are likely to be predicated to some extent on dietary and other behavioural habits as well as perhaps some genetic predisposition. This can lead to chronic relapsing of these and other conditions. However, if homeopathic remedies can be applied over a longer period of time, then the evidence so far shows that it can relieve the symptoms of these conditions.

Our clinic situations had some intrinsic challenges. Sometimes, there were so many patients to see that there was not enough time to take a full constitutional case. One of the distinctions that needed to be quickly made was the type of case it was and how deeply one had to go into the case-taking and analysis process. While individualising each case is essential, within that it can be possible to prescribe quickly based on a few symptoms.

Most people simply expect to be given 'medicine'. They do not come to us because it is homeopathy but because we are there and our medicine seems to work. Most people do not come with psychological issues and find it strange if we ask questions about fears, anxieties, and dreams. However, that does not deter us from making some analyses on a constitutional basis, looking at basic body type, considering generalities and a few characteristic symptoms.

Also, with certain conditions it can be difficult to identify the important 'individualising' symptoms that help to find a remedy. This can be especially so when practising in rural parts of Africa where there may be language challenges and many people who are not used to describing their symptoms. They simply want a medicine. This can be the case when looking at treating diabetes and hypertension and, given their prominent position in the diseases commonly seen, we experimented by giving nearly all people with these conditions the same homeopathic medicine if no characteristic symptoms were seen, treating it as if it was an epidemic,

Richard visiting students doing internships at a local hospital

even though it is a chronic disease. Given the physiological process of both hypertension and diabetes we concluded that sodium salts may be useful. *Natrum muriaticum* is an excellent remedy for hypertension, due to physical and psychological causes. *Natrum sulphuricum* tends to be good for some diabetes. Therefore, if we found no strong indications for another remedy, we used these remedies routinely in these conditions, and preliminary evidence supports that these remedies may have a specific use in these conditions.

Therefore, when analysing the overall results and looking at specific conditions, one can conclude that homeopathic remedies have been shown to be clinically effective. The goal is now to expand the database and perhaps cooperate with other organisations working in Africa that are either using this method of analysis already or can integrate their data in a similar way. Numbers of cases seen in many different situations could then provide further evidence of the relevance and efficacy of homeopathic medicine in an African context.

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