

Homeopathy

Position statement - October 2025

Position

The RACGP supports and advocates for the use of evidence-based medicine, where clinical decisions are guided by the best research information.

Given the strong evidence currently available that homeopathy has no clinically important effects as a treatment for various clinical conditions, the RACGP position is:

1. Medical practitioners should not practice homeopathy, refer patients to homeopathic practitioners, or recommend homeopathic products to their patients.
2. Pharmacists should not sell, recommend, or support the use of homeopathic products.
3. Private health insurers should not offer rebates for, or support homeopathic services or products.

Background

The claim that homeopathy is an effective treatment for a range of clinical conditions is not supported by evidence from systematic literature reviews.

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) published a position statement in March 2015, following an assessment of the scientific evidence on the effectiveness of homeopathy in treating a range of clinical conditions.¹ NHMRC concluded there are no health conditions for which there is reliable evidence that homeopathy is effective.

Homeopathic preparations have also been demonstrated not to provide immunity against vaccine-preventable diseases and should not be used as a substitute for vaccination.²

Since 1 April 2019, 16 natural therapies, including homeopathy, have not been eligible for the Private Health Insurance Rebate. This decision was informed by an evaluation of the evidence undertaken by NHMRC.³ The *Natural Therapies Review 2024*, published in March 2025, reaffirmed the exclusion of homeopathy due to low or very low certainty evidence to support its clinical effectiveness.^{4,5}

Harms associated with homeopathy

Homeopathic products are sometimes considered harmless as the active ingredient is usually highly diluted and may not contain even a single molecule of the original source material. Regardless of this, there are still risks associated with the use of homeopathy.

Delaying or avoiding conventional medical care

When the use of homeopathy causes a person to delay or avoid consultation with a registered medical practitioner or reject conventional medical approaches, serious and sometimes fatal consequences can occur. Misleading claims from

homeopathic practitioners⁶, retailers⁷ and individuals^{8,9} can contribute to this risk by misleading the public about the effectiveness of homeopathic treatments.

When homeopathic vaccines are used as an alternative to conventional immunisation, both the individual and the community are left exposed to preventable diseases.

Problems associated with unregulated products

Although homeopathic products manufactured in Australia are regulated as medicines under the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989, products sold on international websites may not meet Australian quality and safety standards. These products may be of particular concern when materials from problematic sources are employed in the preparation (e.g., pathogenic organs or tissues; causative agents such as bacteria, fungi, parasites, ova, yeast, and virus particles; disease products; excretions or secretions; heavy metals and toxins such as aconitum, kerosene and thallium). Impurities of source material and contamination associated with poor manufacturing processes also present threats to the quality and safety of these products.¹⁰

Direct adverse effects

Various direct harms associated with the use of homeopathic products have been noted in the literature, including allergic reactions, drug interactions, and complications related to the ingestion of toxic substances.¹¹

Cost to patients

Homeopathic treatments are not covered by Medicare or private health insurance. Consultation fees and the costs of remedies can accumulate, particularly for individuals with chronic conditions requiring ongoing care. Given the absence of evidence supporting clinical effectiveness, these expenses represent an unnecessary financial burden and may impact the ability of the patient to pay for effective, evidence-based medical care.

Further guidance on responding to patient requests for tests not considered clinically appropriate is available in the RACGP's position statement on this topic.¹²

The importance of patient-centred practice

The RACGP supports the concept of patient-centred practice, in which the values, preferences, and personal healthcare philosophy of the patient are respected and individuals play an important role in their own healthcare. National surveys have found that complementary medicine is commonly used in Australia, with 49.4% of adults reporting some form of use and approximately 6.8% using homeopathic medicines in the previous 12 months.^{13,14} It is important these patients feel comfortable in discussing their use of complementary and alternative medicines with all members of their healthcare team.

It is good practice for medical practitioners to initiate conversations with patients about their use of or intention to use homeopathy and assist patients to think critically about the efficacy and safety of homeopathy so that they may make informed healthcare decisions.

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