

- Title** Homeopathic medicines – A Health Technology Assessment
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- Reference** link to full report in French:
https://www.has-sante.fr/jcms/p_3067191/fr/evaluation-des-medicaments-homeopathiques

Aim

The aim was to assess the validity of maintaining the current reimbursement scheme of homeopathic medicines by the National Health Fund. The appraisal issued by the Transparency Committee (TC) was based on the following:

- efficacy;
- adverse effects;
- care pathways, particularly with respect to relevant and available therapies;
- disease/condition severity;
- public health benefit (PHB).

Conclusions and results

The TC issued a negative opinion on homeopathic medicines reimbursement, considering:

- the absence of severity of certain benign, spontaneously regressive conditions or symptoms for which no medical need is identified and for which the use of medicines (including homeopathy) is not necessary;
- the absence of demonstration of efficacy (in terms of morbidity and/or quality-of-life) from homeopathic medicines in health conditions for which data was found in literature (non-significant data and/or methodological weaknesses limiting conclusions on superiority to the placebo or an active comparator or absence of comparison to clinically-relevant comparators); the absence of demonstration of their PHB, especially their benefit on the other medicinal products consumption;
- the absence of clearly-defined role of homeopathic medicines in the care pathway in health conditions for which data were found in literature;
- the absence of data in other health conditions (not found in literature) for which homeopathy is used in clinical practice and therefore the absence of role in these situations;

and despite:

- the severity and/or potential impact on the quality-of-life of patients of certain health conditions evaluated, for which there is a medical need for alternatives or complementary medicines;
- the very good safety profile of homeopathic medicines.

This appraisal is based on data taken from 21 systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses, 10 randomised controlled trials and 6 PHB studies targeting 24 health conditions.

Regarding the efficacy, no robust studies showed the superiority of homeopathic medicines over conventional treatments or the placebo. Additionally, no studies with evaluation of patient quality-of-life as primary objective were identified. As a result, no impact on quality-of-life was demonstrated.

Although safety data were not reported in most of the selected evidence, the literature review did not identify serious adverse events. Overall, the data available show the favourable safety profile of homeopathic medicines.

Based on the data available and especially the French EPI-3 study an impact of homeopathic medicines on the reduction of consumption of other medicinal products, healthcare organisation, hospitalisations, misuse or late treatment is not demonstrated.

Methods

This assessment covers common name homeopathic medicines subject to the French registration procedure and currently reimbursed up to 30%. These concern products diluted between 2 and 30CH and used by oral or external route (granules, globules, tablets, suppositories, ointment, drops etc.). Homeopathic medicines subject to marketing authorisation (examples: Camilia®, Angipax®, etc.) are not covered in this document.

This evaluation is based on data from:

- a systematic literature review until April 2019 focused on the therapeutic efficacy, safety and the other criteria for evaluating the PHB;
- a stakeholder consultation: representatives of healthcare professionals, associations of patients and users, pharmaceutical companies concerned by this assessment.

The conditions of training of prescribers and the prescription and dispensing methods for homeopathic medicines do not fall within the scope of this assessment.

Written by

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