



Ghana Homeopathy Newsletter

Issue 6

In partnership with Homeopaths without Borders (Netherlands)

2012

Changing lives with homeopathy in Ghana

By Angelika Metzger

In October 2011 homeopaths from around the world came together for a study trip which was the pilot for a new fund-raising initiative for Ghana Homeopathy. The renowned homeopaths, diagnosticians and teachers, Drs Kalyan and Kalisankar Bhattacharyea travelled from Kolkata to Ghana for three weeks to facilitate the course offering hands-on clinical experience to students and practitioners.



Ghana Homeopathy Project students and teachers en route to the clinic

At the request of a local Chief, Emperor had organised a clinic at Mepe village. We crossed the River Volta by canoe early in the morning to be greeted by three hundred patients! We split into five teams, each with a local translator, and worked flat out until nightfall crossing the river again in the dark. We were back the next day to see as many more patients as possible. We also held clinics at the Community Health Centre at Mafi Seva. Many patients were seen without charge whilst some were asked for a small contribution which we donated to local health centres. All in all we treated over five hundred patients in the course of the trip.

Students from PISHAM, the first homeopathic training school in West Africa, joined us over two consecutive weekends to participate in the learning and to gain clinical experience. Watson, a trainee homeopath at Mafi Seva who acted as our translator much of the time, wrote a wonderful, reflective account of this rewarding experience of sharing and building links between continents.



In what little spare time we had we received lectures in homeopathic philosophy, materia medica and pathology from the two Indian doctors

Dr Julius Berdie, principal of PISHAM, joined us for one of those weekends and invited us to visit a health centre at Vane, near Ho. The clinic has not been in use for some time but the local community wishes to see it up and running again. Dr Berdie is holding monthly clinics at present and we are hoping to be providing a long term volunteer there as well.

After the course participants left, Drs Bhattacharyea, Dr Berdie, two PISHAM board members and myself were invited by the MP of the Afram Plains region to travel there and hold two days of outreach clinics. Afram Plains is a thinly populated and under-developed part of the Eastern Region, between the Volta Region and Accra, accessed by a ferry across Lake Volta. It took us seven hours just to get to the ferry – in the unaccustomed luxury of an air-conditioned car!

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<http://www.ghanahomeopathy.org>

Once across we visited a large secondary boarding school where we spoke to the students about homeopathy and studying at PISHAM. Some of them were very engaged and asked interesting questions. You might like to see Dr Kalyan Bhattacharyea's speech on u-tube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVNdYqyE2IQ&feature=email>

We also met the local Chief and other dignitaries who expressed the wish to see homeopathy established in this remote area of Ghana. On behalf of GHP I thanked everyone for the invitation to the area and their interest in homeopathy. We went on to provide a free clinic for the college students, working till late at night. The next day we held two further clinics in different villages, seeing well over 100 patients, all free of charge. We worked so late that we missed the last ferry and had to cross back over the Lake by canoe in the dark! There were no life jackets on board and it was a bit scary to start with but it turned out to be the most beautiful crossing imaginable, under a starry sky.

The last two days were spent at PISHAM where Drs Kalyan and Kalisankar Bhattacharyea were teaching the students whilst I carried out a project evaluation and held student tutorials. Making the most of our baggage allowances we had between us brought three suitcases of books for the library, two computers, remedies and other supplies from the UK and India. These much-needed and appreciated goods were shared between PISHAM and the Mafi Seva Community Clinic.

We saw some amazing cases and unusual pathologies, including two snake bites, a patient with Hansen's disease (leprosy), others with severe keloids, ulcerations, tumours and so on. Emperor has held follow-up clinics for patients with chronic pathologies and arising acutes and has reported good responses to treatment.



We had visited one lady who had had a snakebite 2 weeks previously which had been treated with local herbs but who had been left with numbness and pain. After Naja LM1 for three days her vitality picked up, the swelling on her leg reduced and after a few more doses she was fine, walking around and smiling again

Our trip was rewarding and inspiring and, for some, a life-changing experience. We had the opportunity to combine the study and practice of homeopathy in rural communities of the Lower Volta region and to strengthen our links across continents. We are planning another study trip in 2013 – places will be limited to ten participants so please let us know as soon as possible if you would like to join us☺



Our urgent need is for financial support. Monetary donations are the lifeblood of our work

<http://www.iustgiving.com/homeopathyinafrica/Donate>

We also need:

Experienced homeopaths, teachers and supervisors to be involved in the training programme. This would involve a two- week trip, teaching in Accra and Mafi Seva

Longer term volunteers to maintain the clinics, organise the programme and continue government level discussions. Ideally you will have at least five years practice experience

Less experienced homeopaths to help with specific tasks

Donations of books, remedies and electronic items such as laptops, video cameras and mobile phones

Help in the UK. Do you have some time or skills to share? We are looking for IT people, video editors, a film maker, a PR material designer, a UK volunteer co-ordinator, and an experienced fundraiser

Fundraising: Can you organise a fundraising event, charity run etc?

A BUSY YEAR

By Linda Shannon

It is seven years ago now since I first visited Ghana and felt moved by the interest in homeopathy that I encountered there. Much has changed since then and we are now a team of dedicated homeopaths and students, in Ghana, the UK, India, and indeed across the globe, sharing our passion for homeopathy and our goal of making homeopathy available to the people of Ghana. It has been a year of both consolidating and expanding our work.

'Life-Changing Homeopathy'

In October 2011, UK co-ordinator **Angelika Metzger** organised an educational and fund-raising programme bringing together skilled homeopaths from India, the UK and Ghana who were joined by our Ghanaian students - see our lead article.

The Premier International School of Homeopathy and Alternative Medicine

Our training Institution in Accra, (PISHAM) is the first of its kind in W Africa. It is the dream of Ghanaian homeopath and Principal of the School, **Dr Julius Berdie**, to establish a homeopathic school in Ghana and the first steps have now been taken to realise this goal. We have thirteen students, nine of whom have now completed year two of a four year professional training. In the last year we have worked closely with the Department of Health's Traditional and Alternative Medicine Directorate who welcome this programme.

We have decided to take the route of Ghana based accreditation of PISHAM and are just beginning a five- year accreditation process, with the support of the Contemporary College of Homeopathy UK (CCH). **Nicky Gibney** and **Lin Lester** from CCH have now been to Ghana, working closely with the PISHAM staff, supporting curriculum planning and quality assurance. **Grace Rhoomes**, a UK trained homeopath, who has moved to Ghana is running the college clinics and practitioner development modules. Her experience and clinical skills have enabled us to make clinic-based learning central to the School's approach. This venture is exciting, dynamic and a lot of hard work. **The cost of the accreditation process is £10,000 so fundraising remains a central task.** The result will be a sustainable Ghana-based education in homeopathy - well worth it!



The inauguration of the School and its Board of Directors was a formal affair conducted by the Deputy Health Minister, Mr Rojo Mettle-Nunoo, who said "I pledge to do all that is in my power to give of my best so that Premier International School of Homeopathy and Alternative Medicine becomes a school of excellence, worthy of emulation in Ghana and in the whole world." As a Board member, I felt incredibly moved

We now have an IT suite at the new school with ten computers and broadband to facilitate shared international learning. Each student will have a more experienced homeopath as a mentor and we can even have a homeopath teach a class from their living room in the UK! We are slowly getting Skype up and running but the frequent electricity black outs are something of a challenge!

We requested donations of books and remedies for Ghana and they have been pouring in. As these cannot be bought in Ghana at present, they are a valuable resource for our students. In August we will send a shipment of 20 boxes of books and remedies to the PISHAM School and its library, which is now becoming well-stocked.

In Mafi Seva **Emperor**, our trainee homeopath and Director of the Mafi Seva Community Clinic, has become very skilled, and some people travel long distances to see him as word spreads. Thanks to kind donations from our supporters, we were able to fund another trip for Emperor to study in India in February 2012. Several homeopaths involved with the project share an interest in mental health, and we have secured a grant from the Homeopathy Action Trust towards a planned research programme into the efficacy of homeopathy in mental health care in Ghana. This will be supervised by **Clare Relton** from the Homeopathy Research Institute.

Over the last year nine volunteers have generously given their time in Ghana, working in the rural clinic in Mafi Seva and teaching at our Accra school - coming from Belgium, Australia, UK and India thus making an increasingly international team. **A big thank you to all trustees, volunteers, supporters and donors for contributing to the dynamic development of our vision for homeopathy in Ghana** ☀

A midwife in Ghana

When **Glenis Paulette's** husband went to work in neighbouring Cote d'Ivoire, Glenis, a homeopath and midwife of 25 year's experience, offered her services to the Ghana Homeopathy Project to help in the homeopathic training of Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs). She was keen to share her knowledge and also to learn from the people of Ghana what their midwifery and health challenges are and how they have overcome them, hoping to be able to apply her newfound knowledge on returning to Abidjan.



While at Mafi Seva I had the opportunity to meet a group of very experienced TBA's. Many had more than 30 years experience. My main objective was to teach them some basic homeopathy because they believed it would a valuable tool working in isolated communities. It was a challenge for me as they were illiterate and spoke little English so I was working with an interpreter. I had produced graphic representations of the remedies, and tried to act out some scenarios where they might be used. Each TBA was given vials of carefully selected remedies to take with them: Arnica and Sepia to tackle the issue of haemorrhage after birth, which they identified as one of their main issues, and Carbo Veg to help with resuscitation of the newborn. We decided on Sepia, also, as many of the women in that community spend their lives working hard on their farms and have birthed several babies. I would have liked to give them some Caulophyllum too, but it was decided not to give them too much new information to absorb at one time. I have been asked to return, and look forward teaching them more remedies in the future

I gave talks introducing homeopathy to a group of midwives and nurses working in a hospital in Accra, and also to this group of independent midwives working in Ho, a town north of Accra . I also enjoyed spending two days with the students at the Premier International School of Homeopathy and Alternative Medicine in Accra, with whom I was able to work on a deeper level



A happy mother delivers her 4th baby at the Mafi Seva clinic with the help of Horlali, the resident TBA. I gave the mother Arnica 30 and she delivered the placenta 20 minutes later



Children of Mafi Seva and our 'consulting room'



Later that night there was a second delivery. Contractions slowed to every 10 minutes during the second stage: I gave her Caulophyllum 200 and she pushed the baby out a few minutes later during one contraction



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Return to Ghana

By Theresa Partington

Last year I returned to Ghana after a gap of three years and was impressed by the changes and progress made by the Project over that period. I spent one week in Mafi Seva and one with PISHAM in Kasoa. I followed my volunteering stint this time with a short trip to Cape Coast and Elmina – something I would recommend to any volunteer working for the Ghana Homeopathy Project.



The first week I passed in the peace of Mafi Seva (now on mains electricity) watching the daily routines going on around me and helping Emperor with clinics. Even in the calmest of rural existences there can be tragedy and hardship with their physical consequences not to mention the legacies of years of labour in the fields

In a neighbouring village women grind cassava to make gari. This versatile tuber is also the basis of Ghanaian staples fufu, banku and tapioca. We left the clinic in this village early when heavy rain threatened to wash the road away!



At PISHAM we worked with role play and students' own presentations of materia medica on the principle that effective learning is an active process rather than a passive one. It feels worthwhile to be involved in training new generations of homeopaths who will in turn be taking homeopathy forward for years to come



Dr Berdie and Martin, his assistant and PISHAM student. The school boasts a good library and up-to-date teaching aids. There is also a student clinic where students can bring their own patients for supervised case-taking



Students are not only learning the complexities of classical homeopathy and repertorisation but are doing it, very successfully, in a language that is not their first one



Not too far from Kasoa there are beautiful Atlantic beaches, National Parks and various conservation projects to visit and learn about. Travel by bus and trotro is easy



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News from the Student Clinic

By Grace Rhoomes



Our students get a broad range of theoretical and practical experiences during their course of homeopathic study at PISHAM. The real life experiences help students to relate theory to practice and develop their therapeutic skills. Students participate as observers and case-takers in our student clinic where people come from across Ghana for homeopathic treatment for a range of physical and emotional health needs. In student clinic this week, we have Ayishetu, with a progressive ulcer on her index finger. The initial symptom was an itchy finger which developed into a fluid filled swelling that spread over her finger and into her palm. After two weeks of hospital treatment, involving lancing the swelling and cutting away necrotic tissue, there is continued deterioration. There are areas in Ghana where certain types of ulcer such as Buruli ulcers are common. The condition is said not to be fatal but it is, however, very disabling for children and adults. It is not known to be endemic in the area where our patient lives, but there is a family history of it. We take the case, our student Fred cleans her finger using water with a few drops of *Calendula* tincture in it and applies a clean dressing.



Fred prescribed Arsenicum album daily to be reviewed in two weeks time. At the time of going to print the ulcer is granulating and healing nicely – Fred's second success with this kind of severe skin condition.

Ayishetu consents to have her photos and case used in the school and elsewhere, if it helps to heal her finger.

Our students are in an exciting position here in Ghana, the potential for good locally trained and well-supported homeopaths is a reality☀

Grace's Blog is now a regular feature on our website
<http://ghanahomeopathy.org/category/graces-blog/>



We cheer our successes and sound out our groans together - our internal journey may be the most challenging of all! But we continue.....Grace

"I have made the transition from a radionics practitioner to a classical homeopath. It was a difficult transition initially but I realise the benefits in working with a patient through careful case-taking, rather than relying on a machine to diagnose patients' needs. I have left my job and am now working independently." Emmanuel

"I don't need to be a great homeopath but I want to be sure that I'm a good homeopath!" Rita

"I don't like studying alone and welcome the opportunity to study with everyone. Students can use the room here for study sessions. Phillip

Trustee Profile

Yolande Diver



Yolande first encountered homeopathy 15 years ago when she was pregnant with her son Jack. What attracted her was that it is a holistic, natural and safe health care system that can give immediate relief - fundamentally important to her as she wanted a more natural approach in treating her new arrival. However for Yolande it was not until she herself fell very unwell with no label for her condition that she truly felt the powerful healing that homeopathy can provide. She then went on to leave a career in fashion to study homeopathy formally at the University of Westminster (BSc Hons) and then to study a further three years with George Vithoulkas. She now practises in North West London.

Passionate about promoting the benefits of homeopathy Yolande is very happy to be part of the Ghana Homeopathy Project team, where her aim is to encourage support for the project by spreading the word through social networking sites☀

Our thanks to

Ainsworths Homeopathic Pharmacy
An Denyser
Barbara MacIntosh
Charles Wansborough
Claire Duguid
Clare Relton
Dada Daneshananda and Dada Pramananda of AMURT Ghana
Darsh Shah of Adler Shine Accountants
Drs Kalyan and Kalishankar Bhattacharyea of Kolkata
Francis Treuherz
Frederick Schroyens and Radar
Glenis Paulette
Homeopathy Action Trust
Ingrid Daniels
Jeremy Sherr
Joseph Zarfaty
Catie Sharples
Melanie Harrison
Mike Bridger, Nicky Gibney and Linda Lester from the Contemporary College of Homeopathy
Ralf Jeutter
Sheilagh Creasy
The Tanner Trust
The Sheaf Trust
Theresa Partington (newsletter editor)
...and the many other supporters who have given funding, books, remedies and supplies

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Our special thanks to Hans Willem Steensma of Homeopaths without Borders for his hard work and support for the team over the past two years.

The Trustees of Homeopathy in Africa

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Yolande Diver
Gillian Chang
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(For more information please see website)

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Send all cheques and Standing Order/Gift Aid forms to:
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