

# Benchmarking the Practice of Homeopathy in Canada === A Summary ===



# Benchmarking the Practice of Homeopathy in Canada === A Summary ===

A Thesis presented to the Faculty of the  
Canadian College of Homeopathic Medicine

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
DCHM (hons)

Elena Bonilla

April 27, 2012

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION .....	4
OVERVIEW .....	5
DEMOGRAPHICS .....	6
PATIENTS .....	9
PRACTICE .....	15
SYSTEMS .....	30
FINANCIALS .....	36
SUPPORT .....	43

# INTRODUCTION

- ❖ The objectives of benchmarking the practice of homeopathy are:
  - To get an understanding of the characteristics of Homeopathy as it is practiced by accredited homeopaths in Canada;
  - To elevate and integrate the practice of homeopathy by keeping the homeopaths aware of the widespread as well as the good practices applied within the community of practitioners based on their experience; and,
  - To be able to contribute to the appreciation and growth of the homeopathic practice.
- ❖ This research was accomplished by conducting a survey to the practitioners that were willing to participate.
- ❖ The process involved the design and distribution of the survey, the gathering, review and analysis of the responses, and presenting and summarizing the results.

# OVERVIEW

- ❖ A total of 426 homeopathic practitioners across Canada were invited to participate in the survey. Invitations were sent via e-mail only.
- ❖ The survey consisted of 80 questions that took approximately 20 minutes to complete. The survey was up and running from February 21<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012.
- ❖ The e-mail addresses of the accredited homeopaths invited to participate were gathered from the directories of the Canadian Homeopathic Schools and Organizations' websites that publish this information.
- ❖ Of the total e-mail addresses sent, 344 or 80.7% were valid. 69 or 20% of homeopaths responded although not every participant filled out all sections. 36 homeopaths or 52% of respondents fully completed the survey.
- ❖ The results are tabulated based on the responses received in each specific section.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

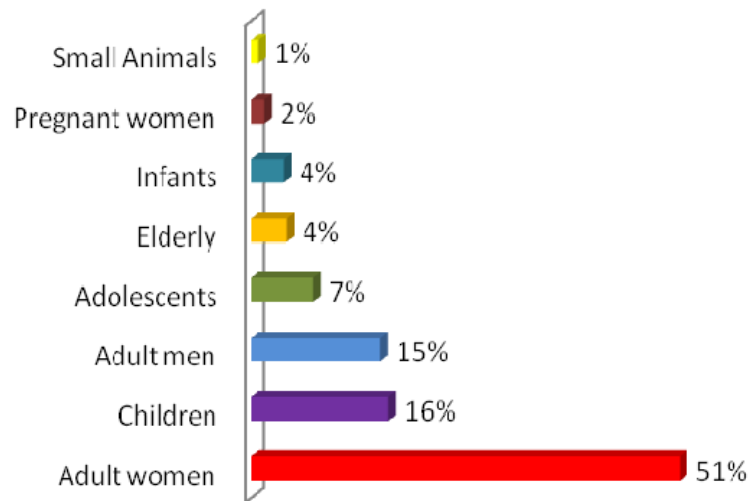
- ❖ The average age range was from 41 to 50 years old, and 84% were female.
- ❖ 75% studied homeopathy in Canadian Schools of which 75% are located in Ontario, 21% in British Columbia, and 4% in Quebec. The remaining 25% of homeopaths studied abroad of which 10% studied in the United Kingdom.
- ❖ 73% studied homeopathy on campus. On average the homeopaths have received their diploma in year 2002.
- ❖ The average number of years in practice was 9 years. 18% of respondents had more than 16 years of practice and these experienced and seasoned homeopaths completed the survey in its entirety.

- ❖ About half of the homeopaths considered important to have other health-related diplomas. 59% hold on average 2 other diplomas in addition to Homeopathy. The top 5 other diplomas are on: Reiki, Nutrition, Reflexology, Herbs, and Naturopathic Medicine.
- ❖ 65% of homeopaths are registered in one homeopathic organization being the Canadian Society of Homeopaths (CSOH) the most popular followed by the National United Professional Association of Trained Homeopaths (NUPATH). 18% of homeopaths are registered in 2 organizations.



**PATIENTS**

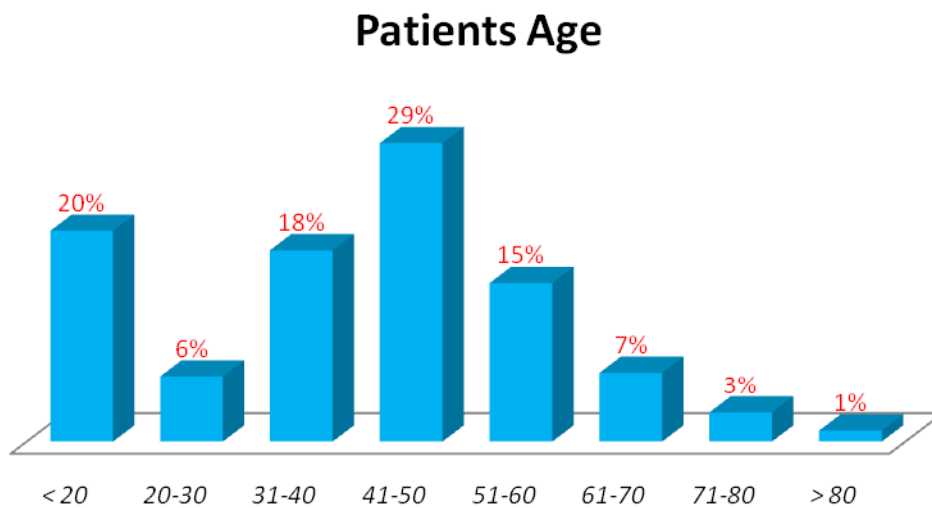
## Patients Treated



*90% of patients treated by homeopaths reside in Canada. 45% of homeopaths have solely Canadian residents as patients.*

*Over than half of patients treated by homeopaths are adult women.*

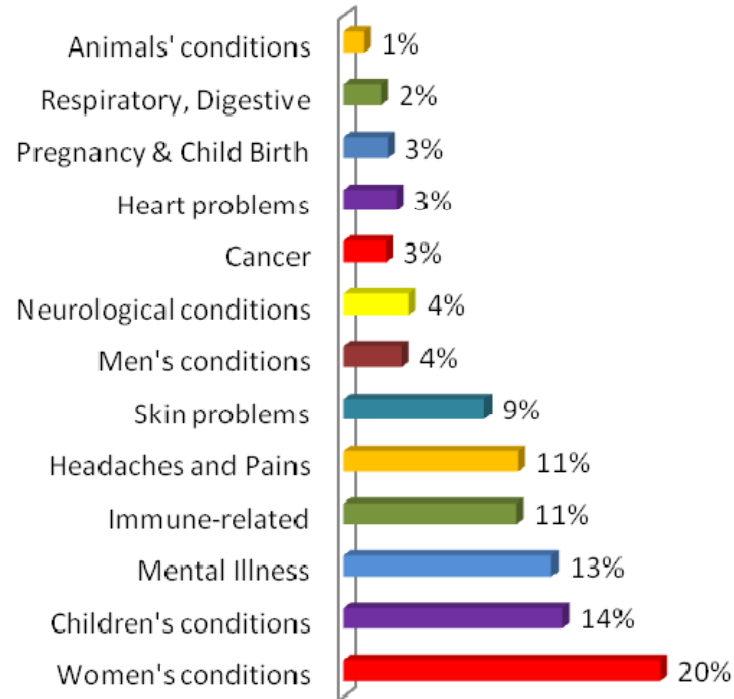
*75% of cases treated are chronic.*



*The average age of the patients treated is in the range of 41 to 50 years old. 73% of the patients treated are younger than 51 years old.*

*67% of new patients are referrals from patients' friends or patients' relatives and referrals from other practitioners.*

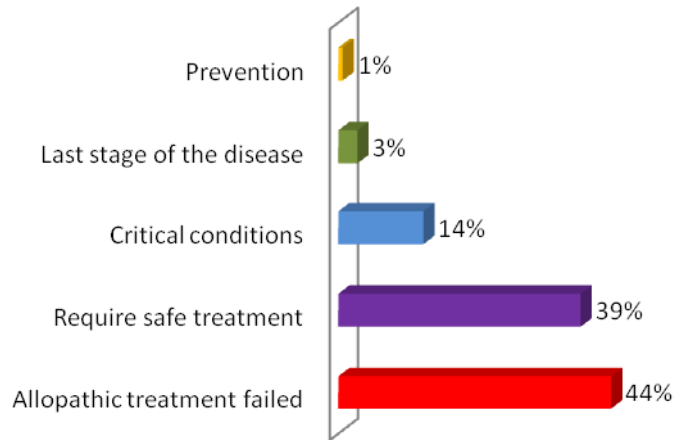
## Patients Conditions



*These conditions relate to the chief complaints of the patients coming for homeopathic treatment.*

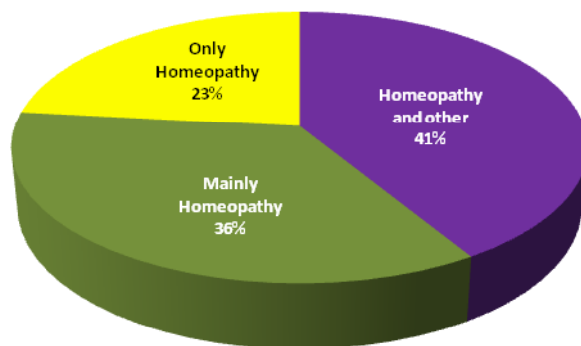
*37% of conditions treated are women's, children's, and pregnancy & child birth.*

## Why are Patients Coming



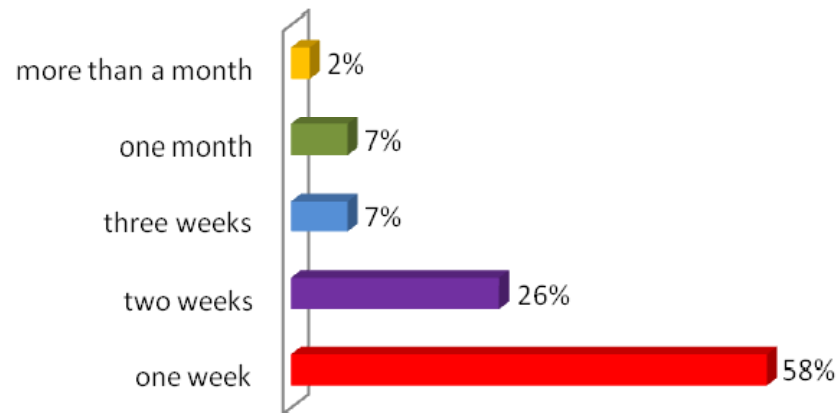
*44% of patients look for homeopathic treatment after trying allopathic treatment without success.*

## Treatment Approach



*On the other hand only 23% of homeopaths treat the patients only with homeopathy and 41% of homeopaths use a combination of homeopathy and other treatment.*

## Waiting Time of New Patients



*The average number of patients per month is 23.*

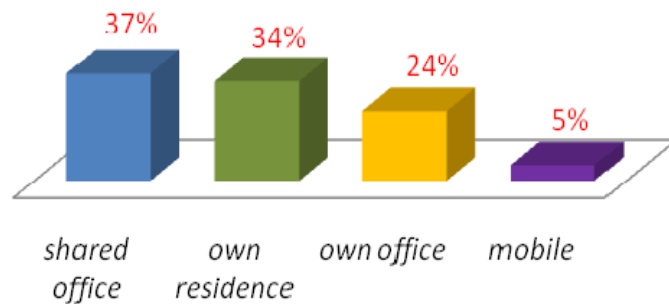
*58% of patients have to wait one week for treatment.*

*Each patient has an average number of 6 appointments in a year.*

*91% of homeopaths empower their patients on what to look for in their overall health and symptoms.*

# PRACTICE

## Practice Location

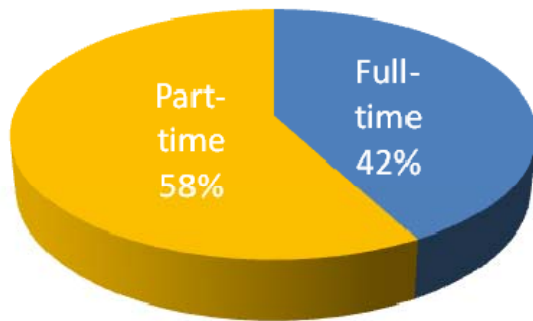


*58% of homeopaths practice 'solo' in their own office or their own residence.*

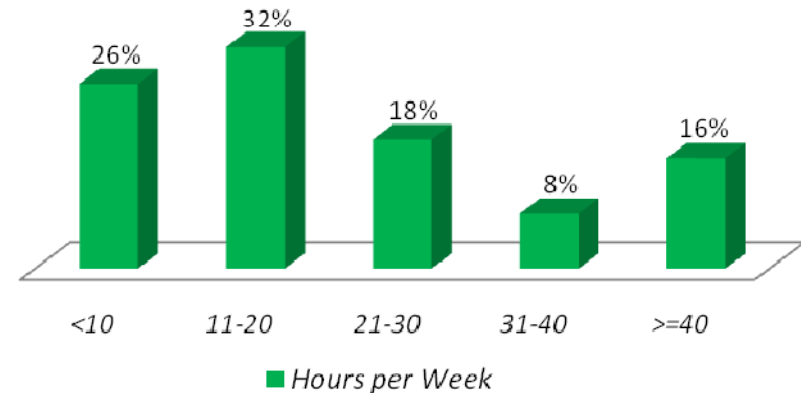
*71 % had their office located in Ontario where the respondents reside.*



## Practice Dedication

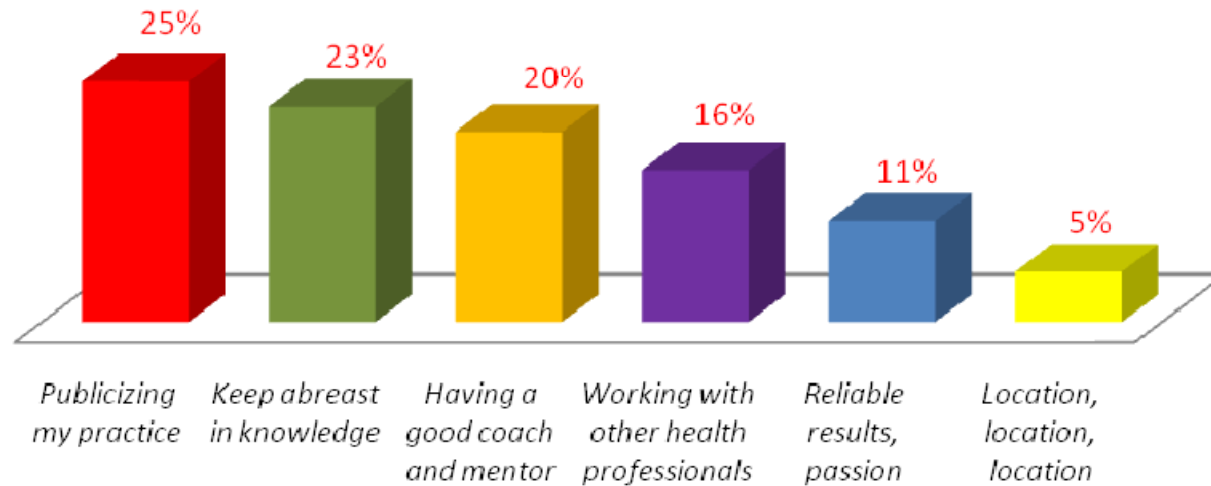


## Homeopathic Practice Dedication

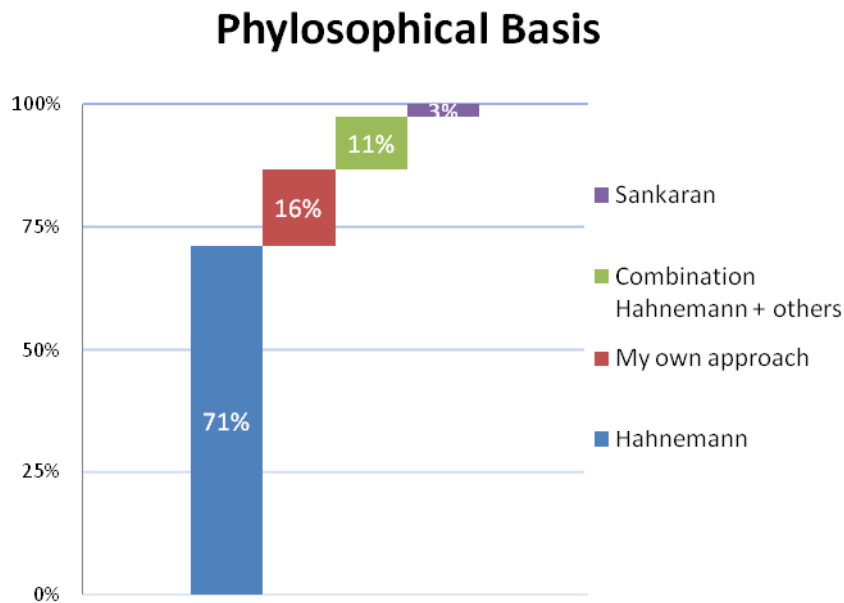


*58% of homeopaths practice homeopathy on a part-time basis working less than 20 hours per week. Overall the average number of hours per week is 19. Based on the time spent, the homeopaths dedicate 77% on homeopathy and 23% on others like nutrition, chiropractic and others.*

## Critical to Succeed



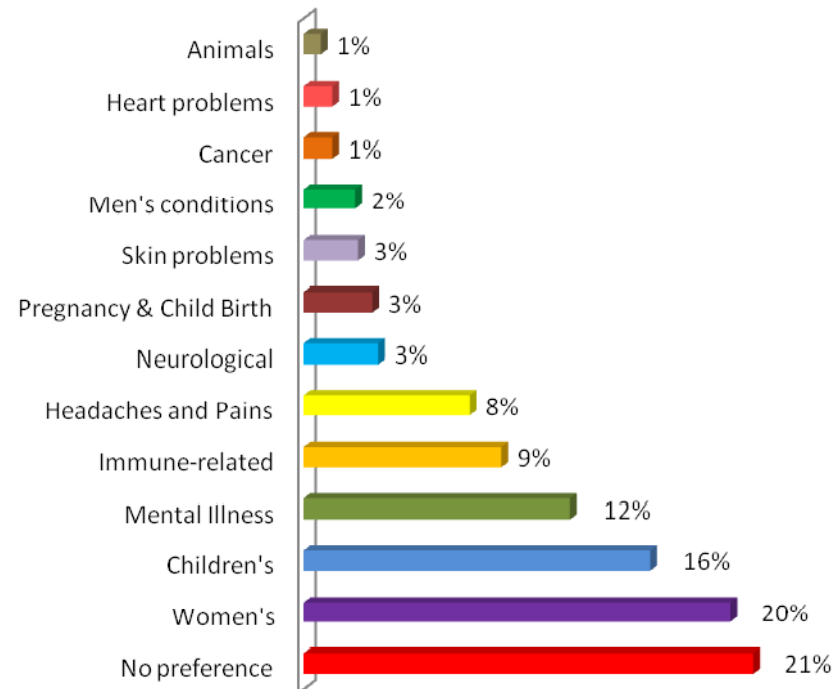
*The homeopaths participating in the survey considered that keeping abreast on their knowledge and having a good mentor represents 43% of success in their practice, and publicizing their practice represents 25%.*



*The majority of homeopaths or 71% of total respondents, apply Hahnemannian philosophical basis in their practice.*

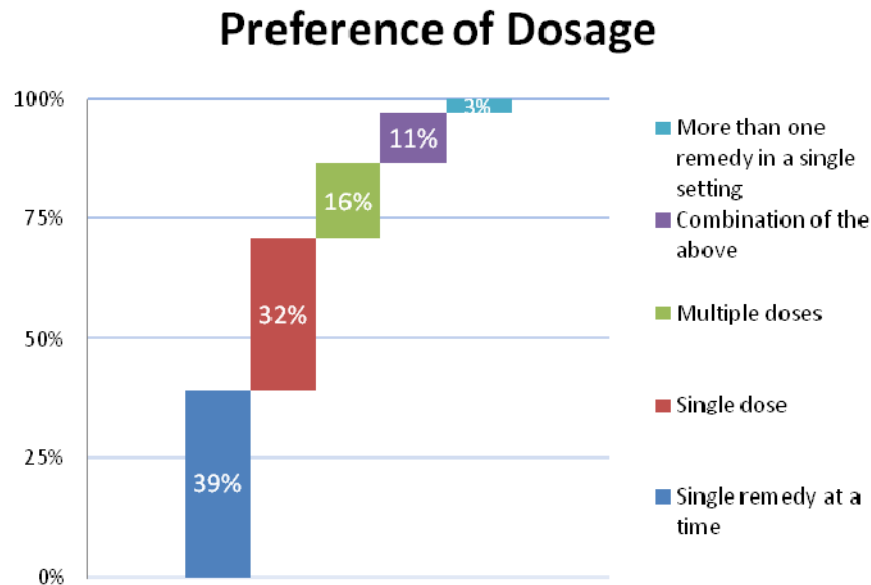
*Being the main reason that it adheres to the original teachings of its founder.*

## Preference in Treating Conditions



*Being homeopathy a holistic medicine it is no surprise to see that there is no preference in treating specific conditions. However, there is a reasonable 20% of homeopaths that prefer to treat women's conditions, consistent with the large number of female practitioners.*

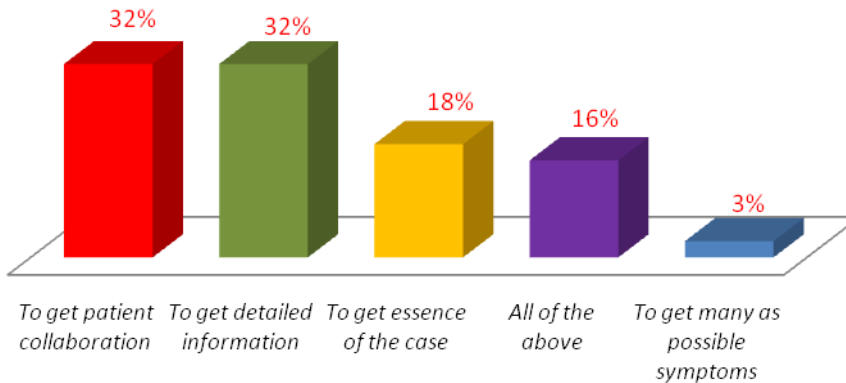
*39% of homeopaths prefer to start with a 200C potency.*



*39% give a single remedy at a time and 32% use single dose during treatment.*

*Most frequently remedies prescribed are polycrests and the format of dispensing the remedies is either pellets or liquid dose.*

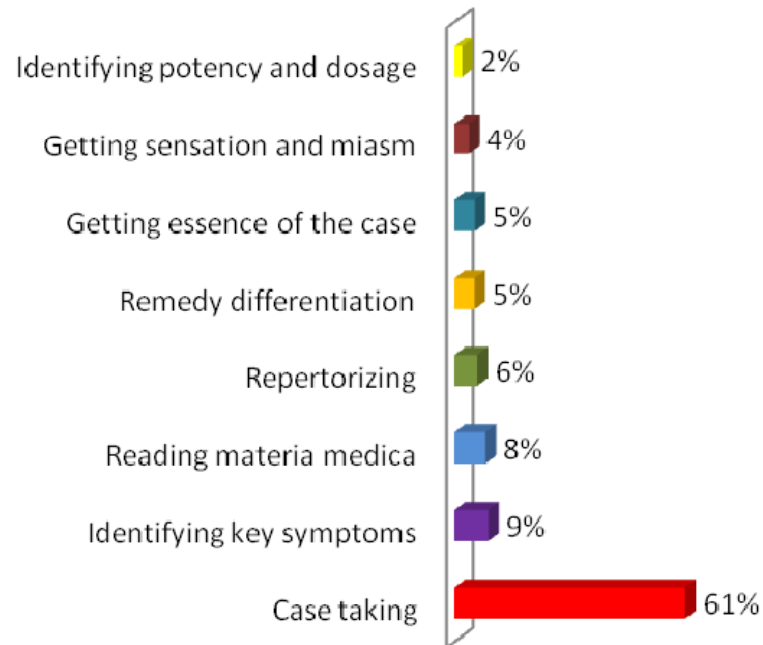
### What is Important on First Consultation



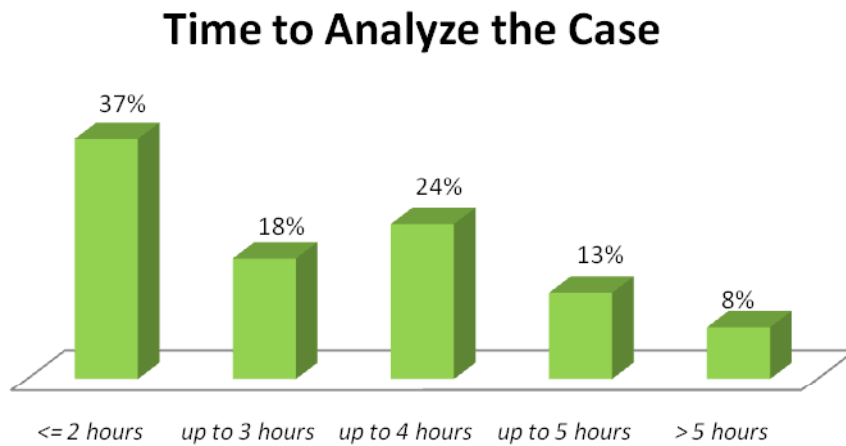
*The first consultation is critical in treating a case homeopathically and the respondents considered more important to get the collaboration from the patient while getting detailed information.*

*76% dedicate 2 hours for the initial consultation.*

## Breakdown of Time Spent during First Consultation



*The majority of practitioners have a focused approach during the first consultation. Case taking is critical, even more than identifying the key symptoms or getting the essence of the case.*

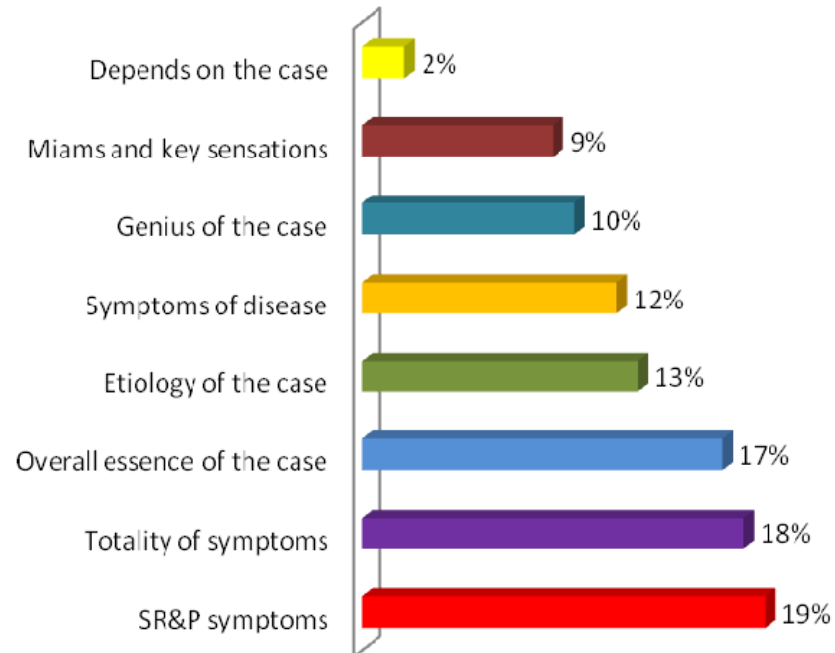


*79% of respondents need between 2 and 4 hours to analyze the case.*

*32% give the remedy immediately after the consultation, 40% give the remedy between 1 to 2 days after.*

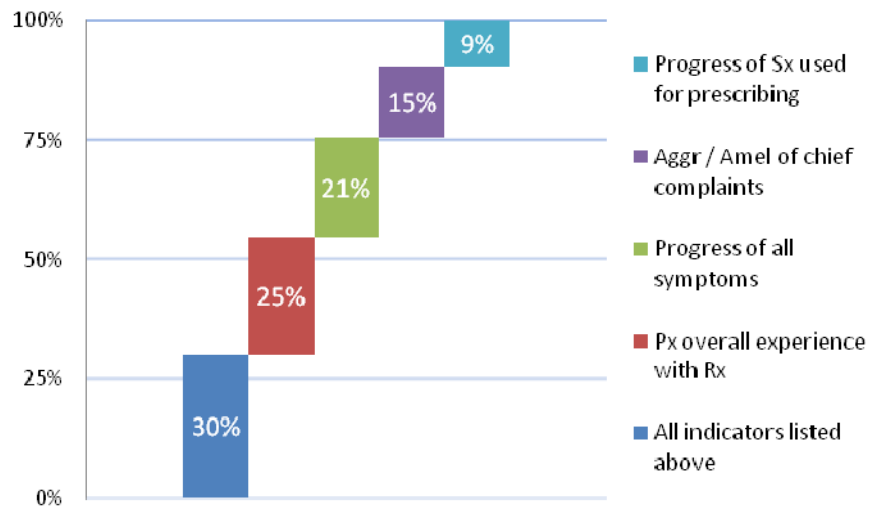


## What Guides to the Right Remedy



*During the initial consultation what guides the homeopaths on the remedy to prescribe is a good combination of factors not one specific. Half of the respondents inform the remedy prescribed to the patient.*

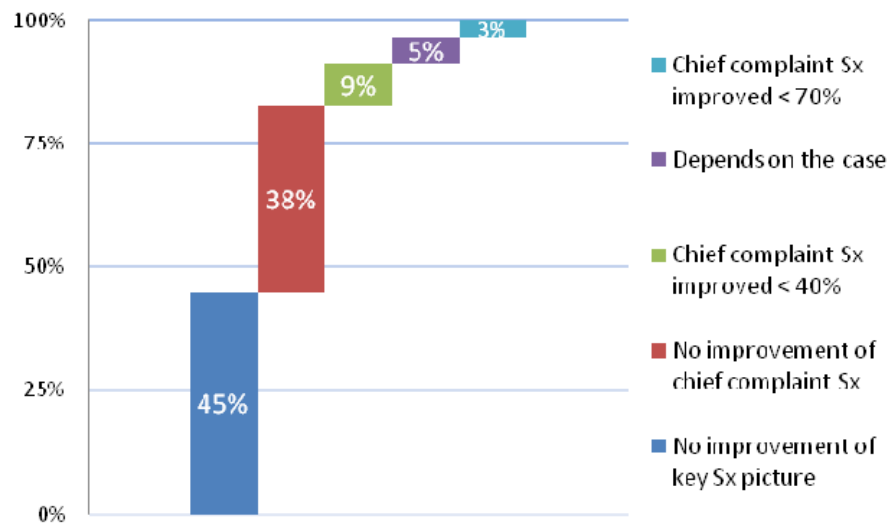
### Follow-up Indicators in Practice



*Getting the remedy that is similimum to the case takes 1 F/U in 39% of homeopaths. The average number of Follow-Ups is 2.*

*To assess the case the homeopaths use a combination of indicators rather than a specific factor being highlighted.*

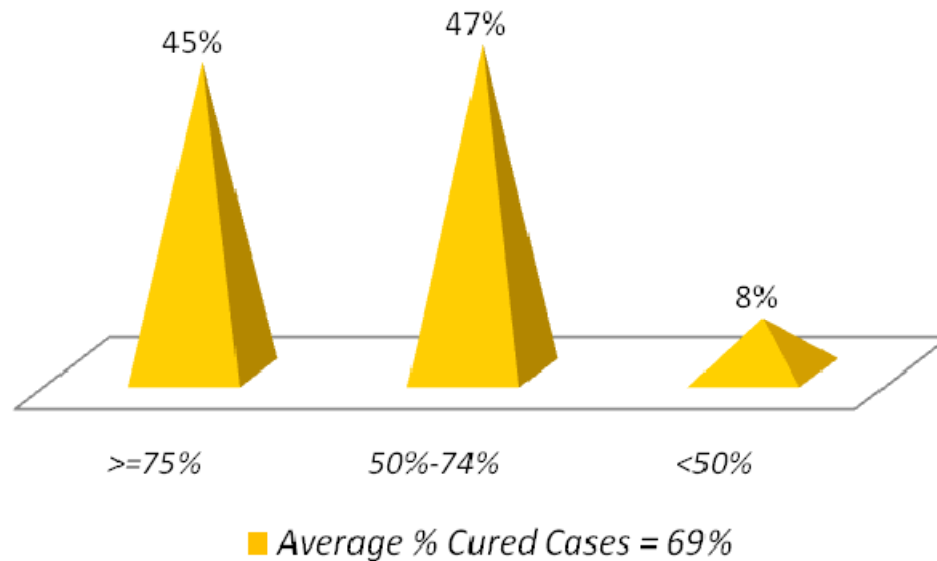
## When to Change Remedies



*The majority of homeopaths only decide to repeat a remedy during the follow up consultation.*

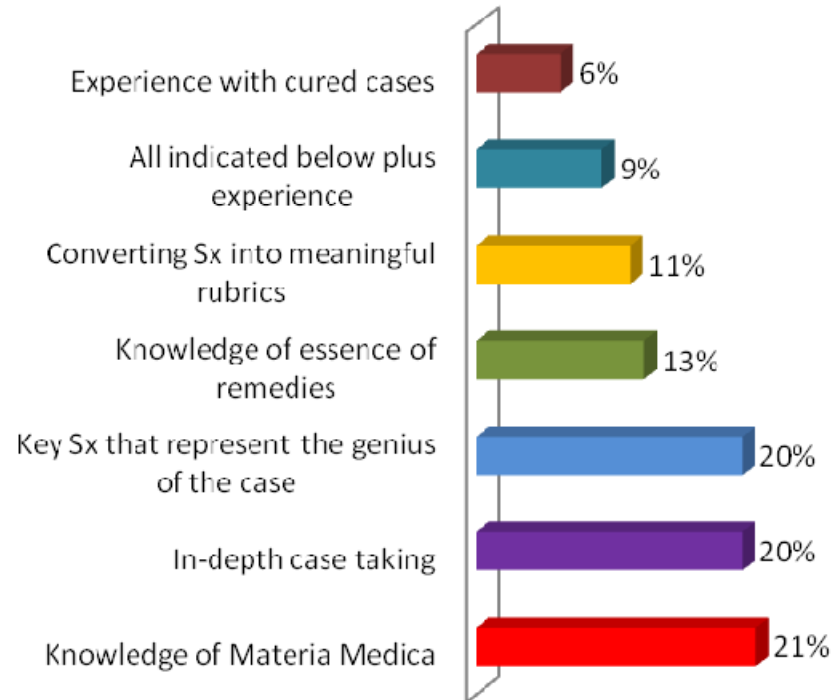
*45% of homeopaths have 'the lack of improvement of the key symptoms picture used for prescribing' as their main decision to change a remedy.*

## Homeopathic Success Stories



*45% of homeopaths reported to have more than 75% of cured cases, 47% reported to have between 50% to 74%, and 8% reported to have less than 50% of cases cured. On average all respondents show 69% of cured cases using homeopathy.*

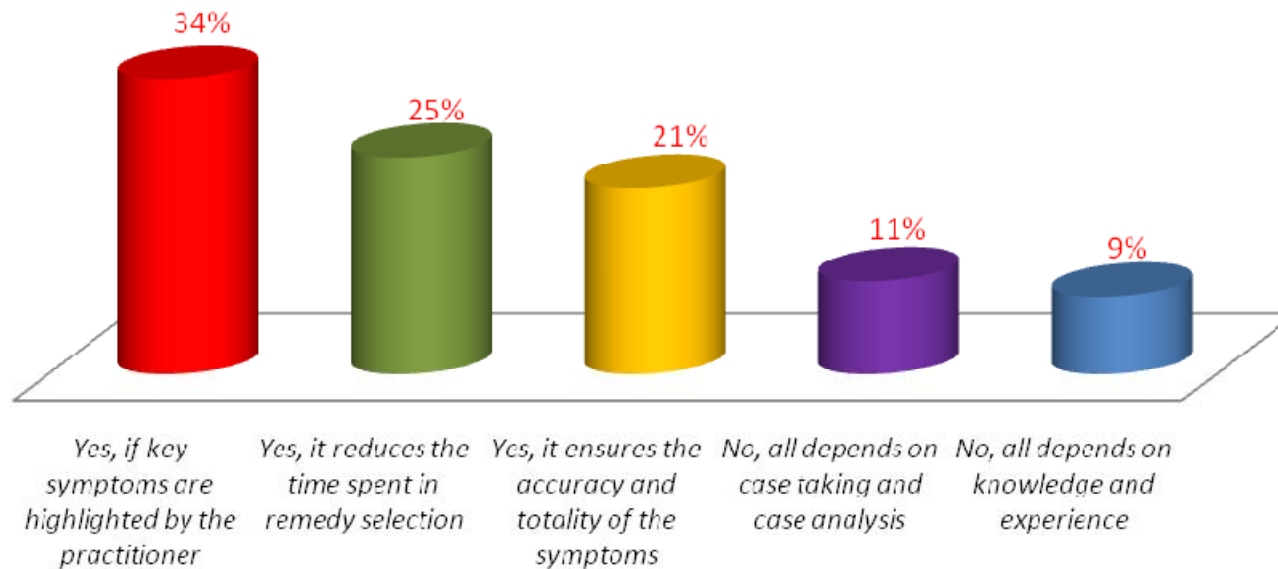
## What is Good Prescribing



*Based on the homeopaths experience, three factors are key to good prescribing: knowledge of materia medica, in-depth case taking, and identifying the key symptoms that represent the genius of the case.*

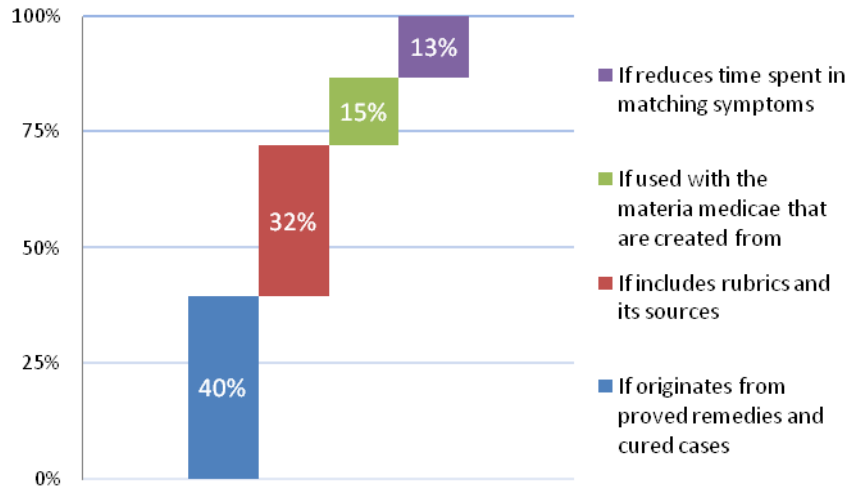
# SYSTEMS

## Importance of a Good Tool in Selecting a Remedy



*Although the use of a good tool is considered important in the selection of the remedy, for 34% this is mostly conditioned by the ability of the practitioner to identify the key symptoms in the case. 46% think that a good tool helps reducing searching time and has the capacity to capture the totality of symptoms. Radar is the software mostly used.*

### Defining a Good Repertory

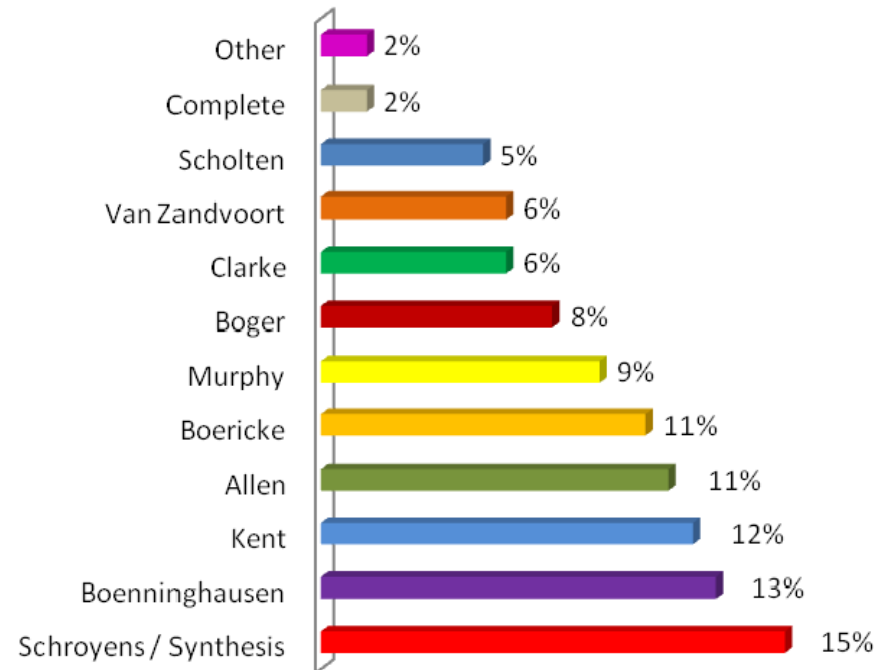


*57% of homeopaths consider the Repertory to be important but only as an initial tool or index, not as a definitive exclusive tool.*

*A good Repertory is considered mostly if it was created from a source that includes well proved remedies and cured cases.*

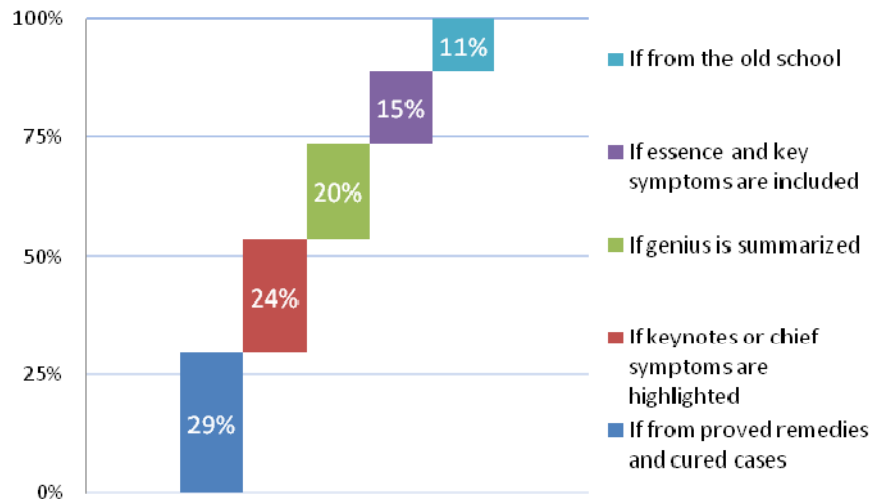


## Repertories Used



*There is no single Repertory that is more prominently used. The top 5 more used are the modern Schroyens (consistent with the popular use of Radar), and the classicals Boenninghausen, Kent, Allen, and Boericke.*

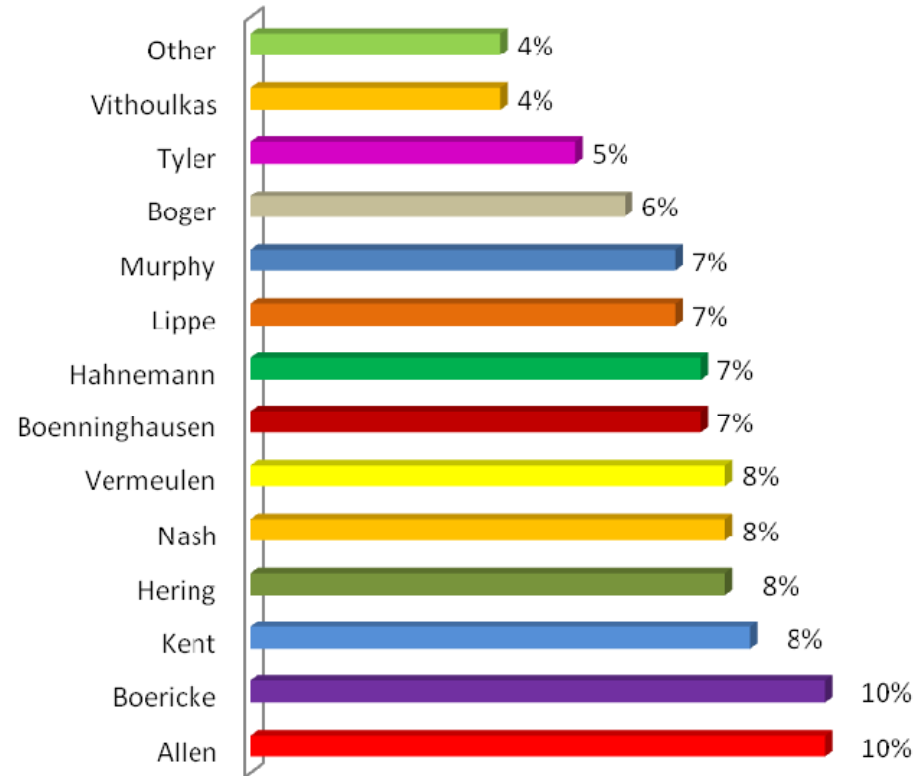
### Defining a Good Materia Medica



*62% of respondents use several Materia Medicae, not one specific.*

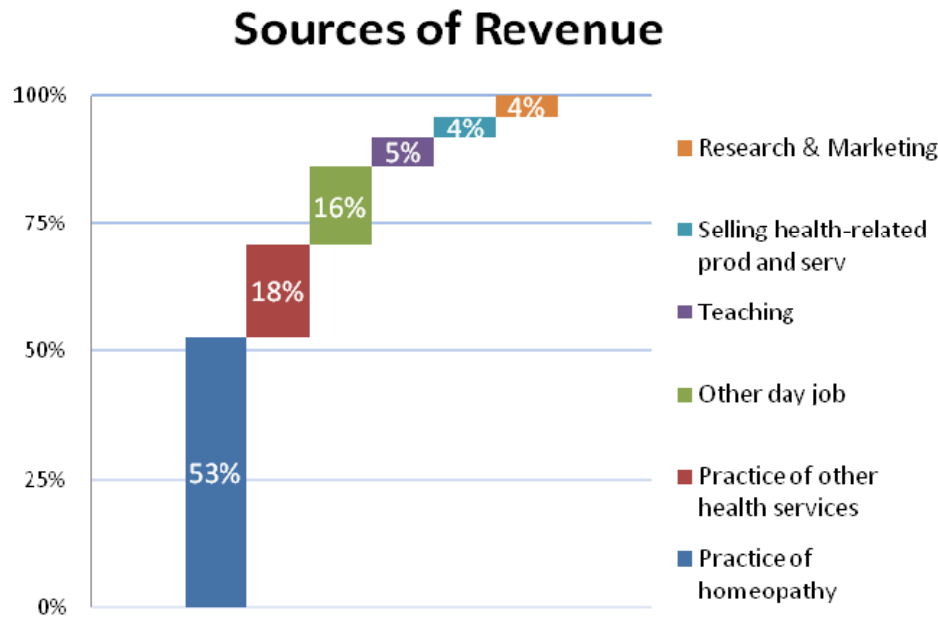
*A good Materia Medica is defined mostly if it contains information from well proved remedies and cured cases and if it highlights keynotes or characteristic symptoms.*

## Materia Medicae Used



*There is no single Materia Medica that is more prominently used. However, there are 2 more popular and both are classicals: Allen and Boericke.*

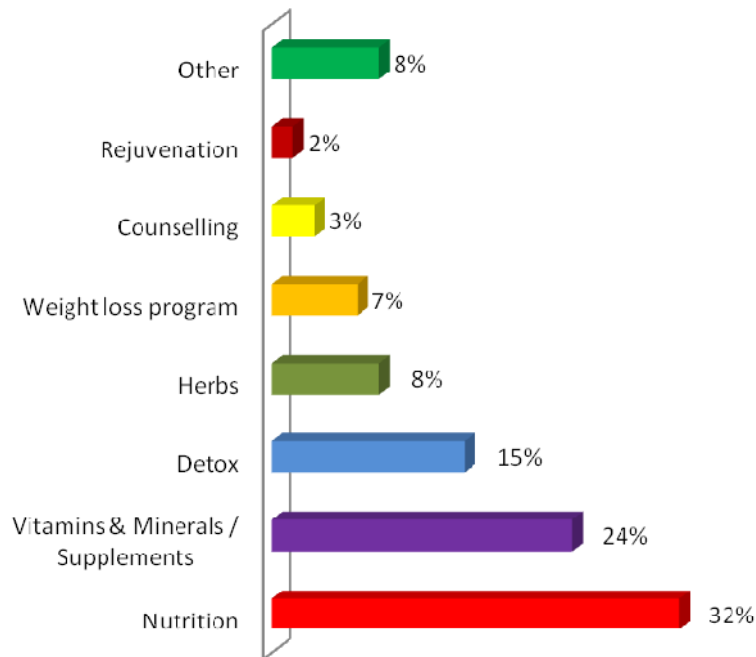
# **FINANCIALS**



*54% of respondents have homeopathy as their main source of revenue.*

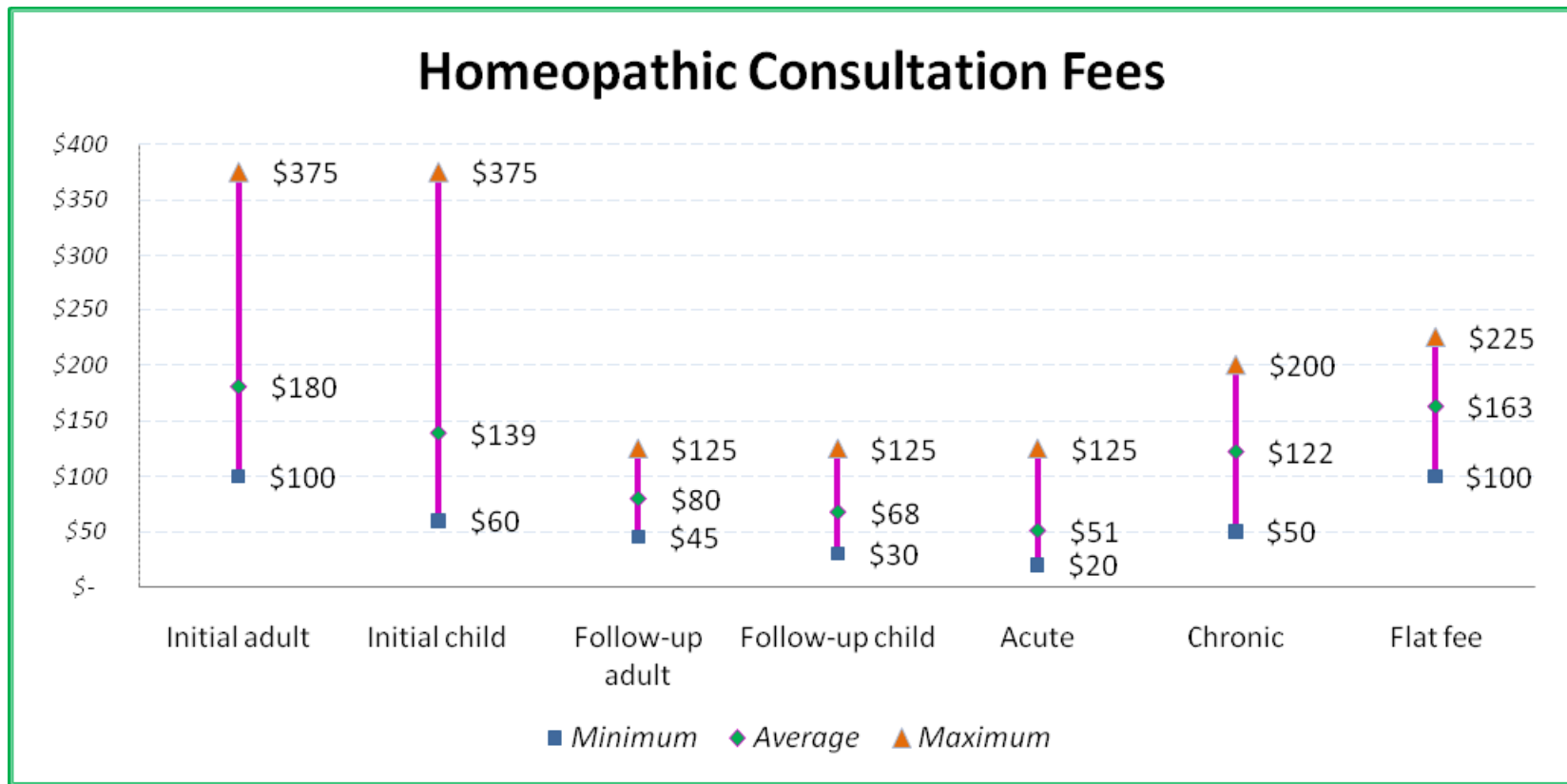
*In 14% of respondents the practicing of homeopathy provides 100% of their revenues while in 46% of the practitioners homeopathy provides less than half of their revenues.*

### Other Health Services Provided



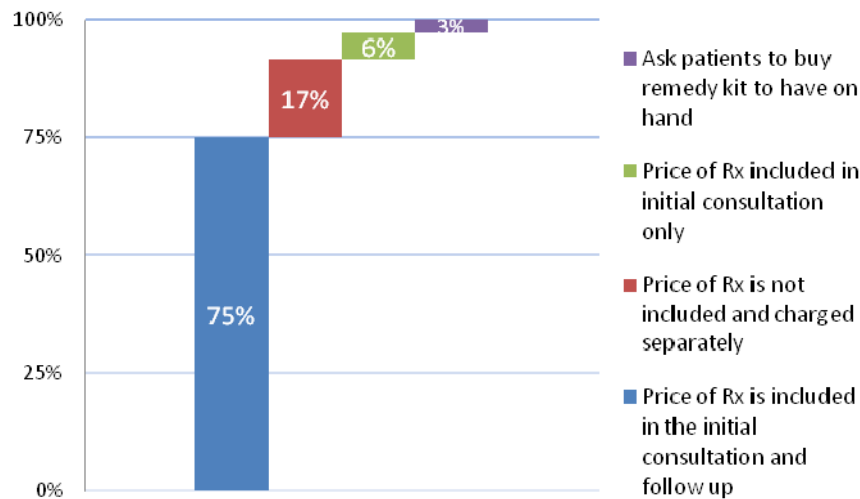
*47% considered important to provide a combination of health services to complement homeopathic medicine.*

*Nutrition and supplements represent 56% of these additional services which could be understood as helping in improving the obstacles to cure.*



*Homeopathic consultation fees vary by homeopath and by type of consultation. This chart summarizes the different fees per type and the ranges from minimum, maximum, and the average for the particular type. One homeopath made an interesting distinction of fees for teenagers at \$140.*

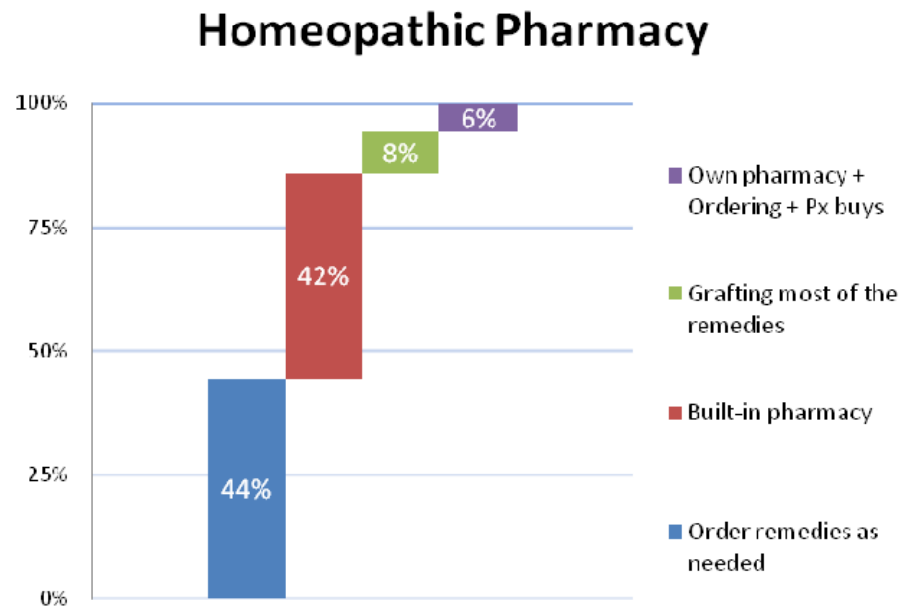
### Charge of Cost of Remedies



*A large majority of homeopaths or 75% of respondents, include the cost of the remedies in the fees of the initial consultation and follow ups.*

*61% of practitioners have a method like scaling that allows for bonuses in case of patients with low income or special conditions like HIV.*

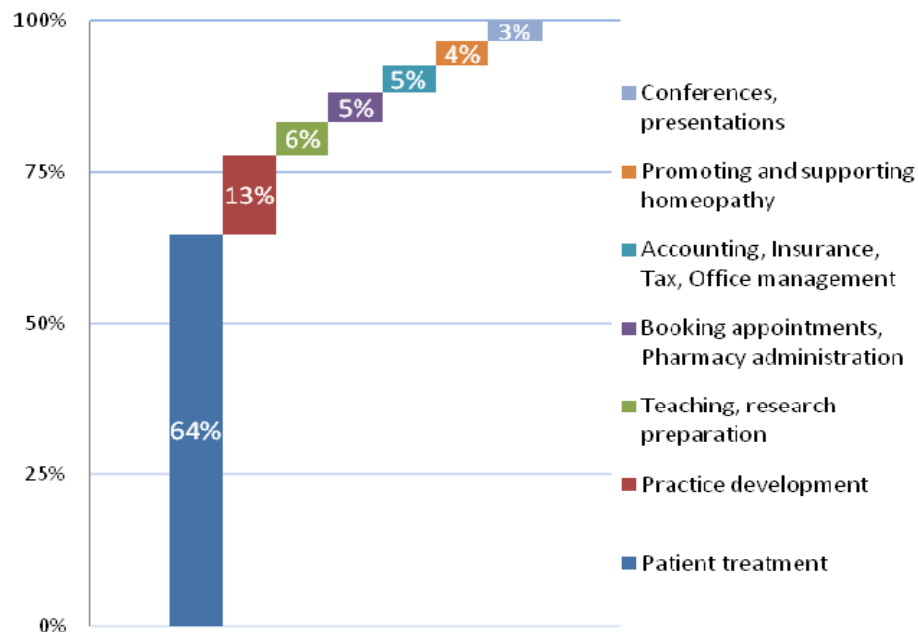




*There are two main ways of administering the homeopathic pharmacies: ordering remedies as needed and built-in pharmacy.*

*In either case the vast majority or 89% of homeopaths handle themselves the inventory and ordering of the remedies.*

## Homeopathic Practice Time Split



*The treatment of patients is the main dedication of the homeopaths representing 64% of their time.*

*37% of homeopaths dedicate 75% of their time to patient treatment while only 14% of respondent spend less than 50% of their time in patient treatment.*

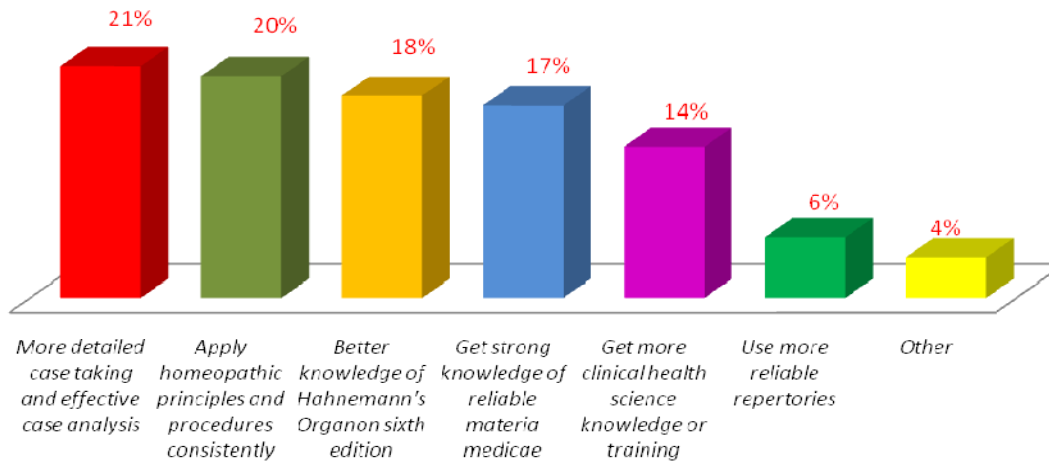
**SUPPORT**

## Supporting Homeopathy



*The main support to homeopathy provided by the practitioners is writing and editing books, articles and journals, as well as doing presentations and preparing conferences. Mentoring and supervision, critical in helping future homeopaths getting it right, represents 16%.*

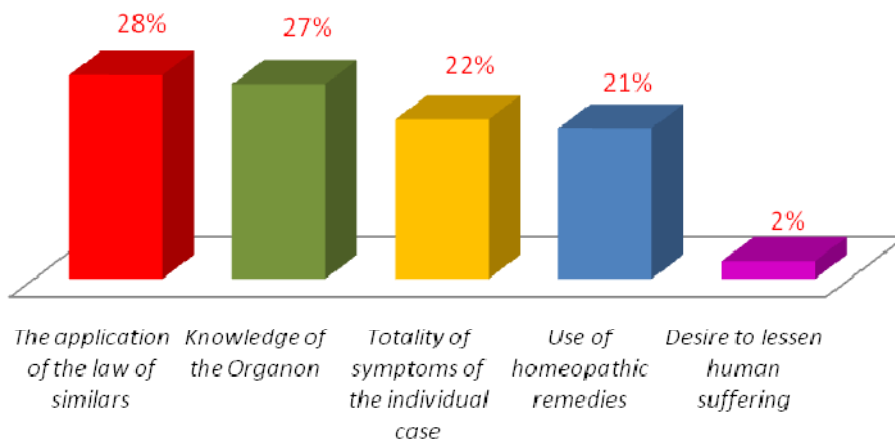
### How to Become Better Homeopaths



*Ideas on how to improve the image of homeopathy is split. The top 3 focus on educating the patient in general, on the importance of follow-ups, and the different homeopathic approaches.*

*At the top of becoming better homeopaths are more detailed case taking and effective case analysis.*

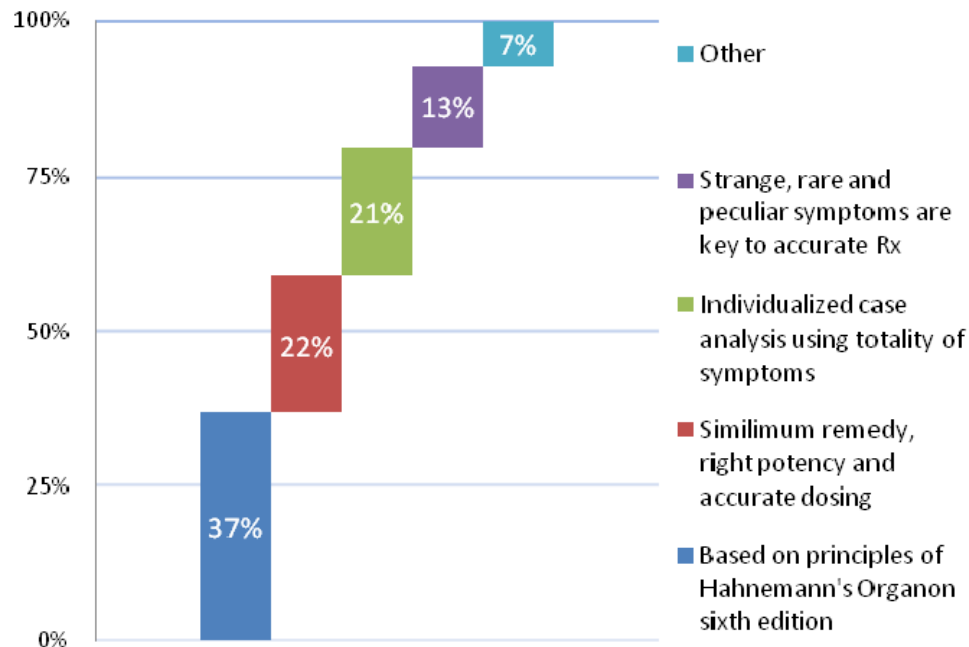
### Common Denominator to Homeopaths



*Based on the responses there is no single common denominator to all homeopaths.*

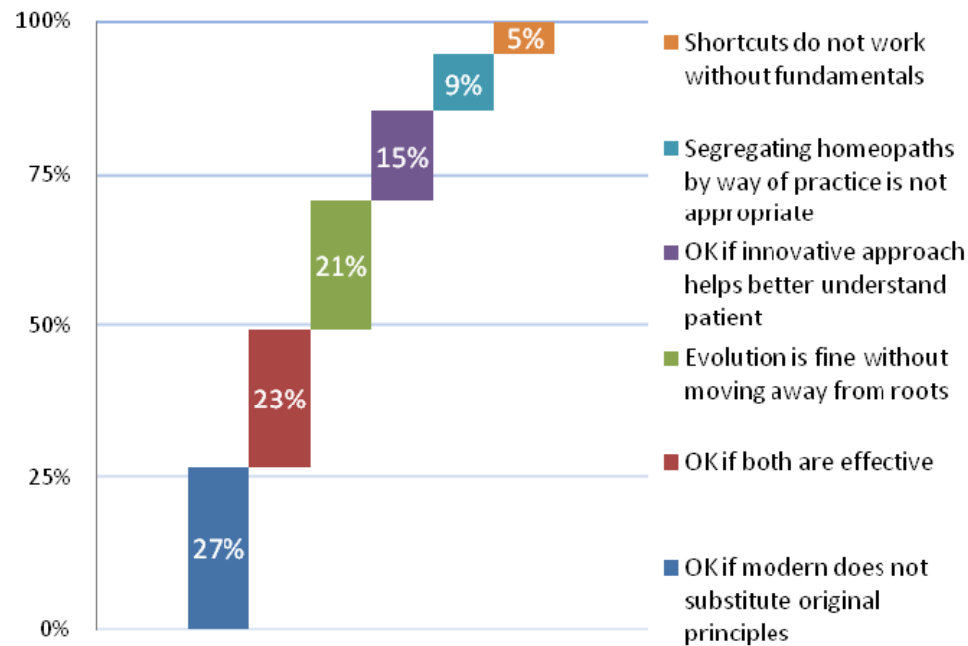
*Similarly there is no single reason to explain the different ways of practicing homeopathy. However the main one is that homeopathy is a science and an art and each practitioner applies it and makes it its own.*

## Hahnemannian Homeopathy



*Defining Hahnemannian homeopathy is not clear. The homeopath that introduced this term said: "I define it as having a solid foundation in the principles introduced in the 6th edition of the Organon and a solid knowledge of the Materia Medica - Pura and Chronic Diseases"*

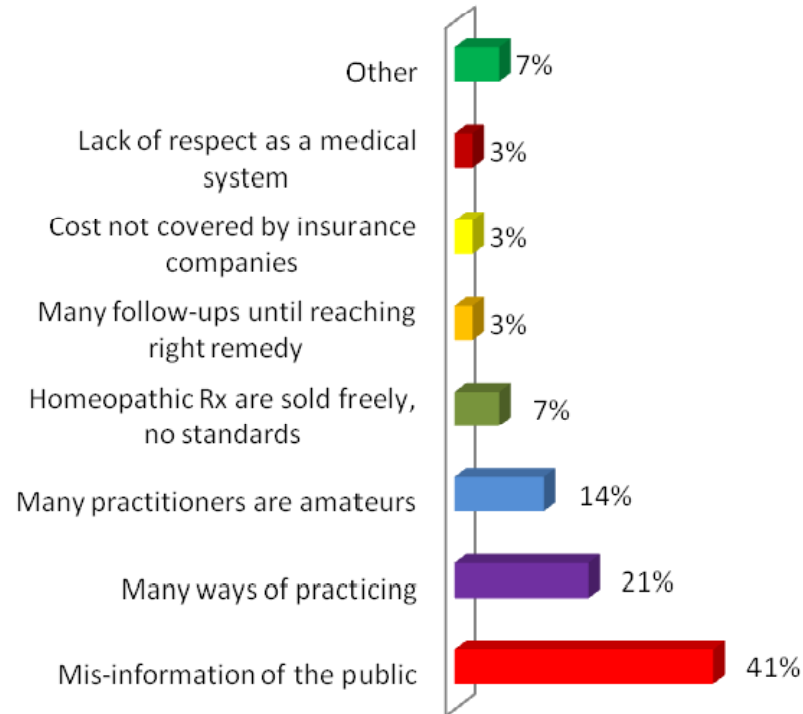
## Fundamental along Innovative



*Having fundamental along innovative approaches to homeopathy is perceived by the majority of practitioners as acceptable only if the modern approaches: do not substitute the original principles, do not move away from the roots, are used to help understand the patient better, and are effective in treating the patient.*

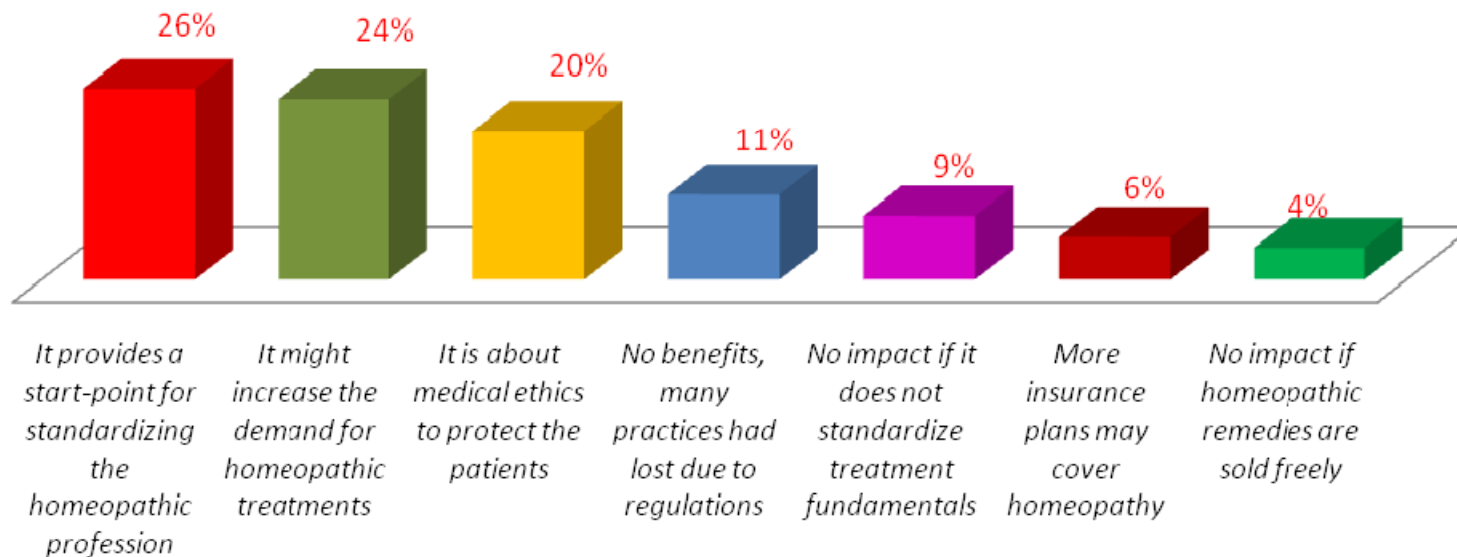


## Practicing Homeopathy Issues



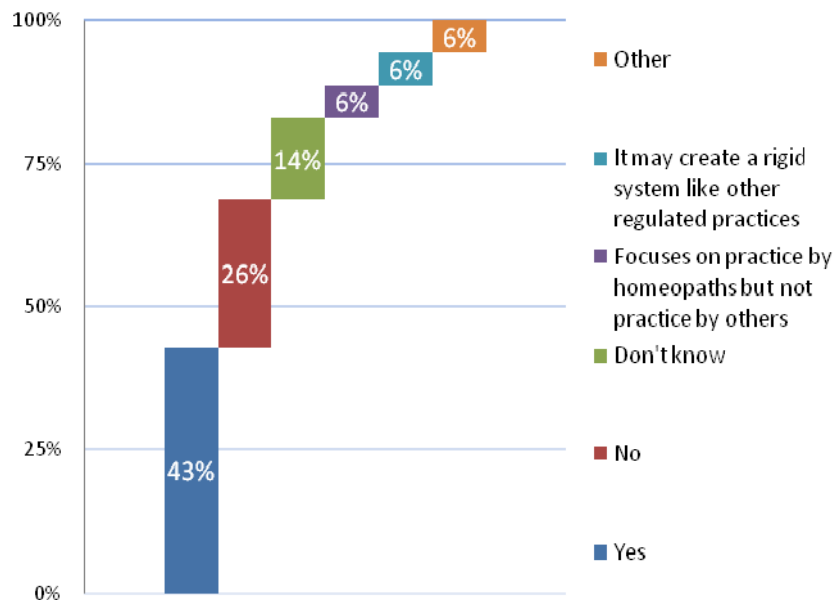
*According to the respondents not applying all basic homeopathic principles and not having a holistic approach are the two main reasons why homeopathy fails. Along with this there is mis-information of the public about homeopathy.*

## Benefits of Homeopathy being Regulated



*The majority or 76% of respondents, see benefits in homeopathy being regulated however the remaining 24% express important concerns based on past experiences of other practices being regulated.*

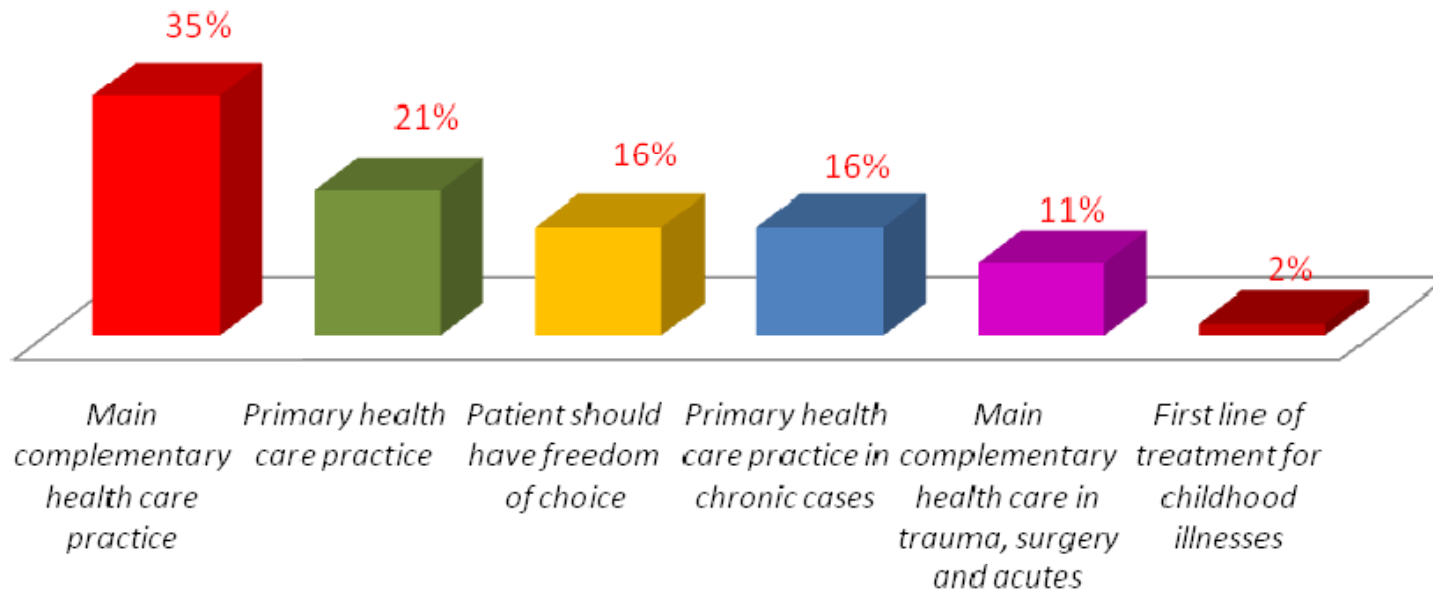
## Agree with Regulation



*43% of homeopaths agree with regulation, 19% don't know, and 38% do not agree because it focuses on the practicing of homeopathy by registered homeopaths leaving others free to practice homeopathy unrestrictedly.*

*69% of respondents do not consider relevant to regulate the remedies.*

## Final Objective of Homeopathy



*46% of homeopaths envision homeopathy as the main complementary health care practice while 37% visualize it as the primary health care. It is important to highlight that the practitioners considered that behind any of these objectives there should be freedom of choice for the patients who want to be treated with homeopathy.*