



AUSTRALIAN HOMOEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION INC.

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WORLD FILM PREMIERE EXPOSES AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH SCANDAL



New investigation and complaint against top Government agency

A NEW documentary has brought Australia's scientific research community under international scrutiny with a premiere in London overnight. (April 6, 2017)

The film, *Just One Drop*, reveals Australia's **National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)** is accused of bias and misleading the public over a damning report into the effectiveness of homeopathy in 2015.

The film shows never before seen evidence and examines the findings of a rigorous two year Australia/UK investigation which reveals the NHMRC used "unprecedented" scientific methods and had multiple conflicts of interest.

A formal complaint against the NHMRC is now before the Australian Ombudsman detailing procedural and research flaws, conflicts of interest, and reporting inaccuracies.

In an Executive Summary of the complaint it concludes the NHMRC's findings are *"inaccurate, highly misleading to the public and unjustly damaging to the credibility of the homeopathy sector"*.

One of Australia's top health lawyers, Dr Teresa Nicoletti of law firm Mills Oakley provided independent written advice raising concerns about the NHMRC's apparent bias, conflicts and flawed procedure surrounding the review.

Gerry Dendrinis of the Australian Homeopathic Association (AHA) was involved in the investigation along with the UK's Homeopathy Research Institute and features in the film.

Mr Dendrinis said Freedom of Information documents show NHMRC's own expert advisers disagreed with the "overly definitive findings" of the Review.

The highly respected Australasian Cochrane Centre advised that the NHMRC's finding of *"no reliable evidence' does not seem an accurate reflection of the body of evidence"*.

Just One Drop reveals:



NHMRC did the review twice – the first review was never made public

- The first reviewer was sacked and the review's existence, its cost and findings never made public.
- The first report was rejected despite being undertaken by a highly respected scientist and author of the NHMRC's own guidelines on reviewing health evidence.

NHMRC misled the public

- NHMRC said the findings of the 2015 report were based on a "*rigorous assessment of over 1800 studies*". In fact the findings were based on only 176 papers.
- NHMRC said it used "standardised accepted methods" but it didn't.
- To be "reliable" NHMRC made the arbitrary decision that a trial had to have at least 150 participants and meet an unusually high threshold for quality.

Mr Dendrinis says: "Our investigation shows NHMRC 'invented', unprecedented and arbitrary rules that **dismissed 171 of the 176 studies leaving 5** that were considered 'reliable'. Of the five, one was positive for homeopathy but the NHMRC still refused to accept its findings."

University of Washington Professor Jennifer Jacobs, also interviewed in *Just One Drop*: "I've never read anywhere that there must be at least 150 subjects in a study for it to be considered valid so it is just an artificial delineation they seem to have made".

The NHMRC regularly funds and collaborates on trials with fewer than 150 subjects.

Conflicts of Interest

- The Complaint to the Ombudsman details how NHMRC **failed to disclose or manage multiple anti-homeopathy conflicts of interest**.

Example: The original Chair of the NHMRC committee, Professor Peter Brooks, was a member of the anti-homeopathy lobby group, Friends of Science in Medicine.

The NHMRC also excluded homeopathy experts from the working committee in breach of its own mandatory research standards.

Gerry Dendrinis: "The NHMRC's job was to accurately summarise all of the evidence for homeopathy. What we ended up with was a review that was biased, ignored positive evidence, violated mandatory administrative and research standards.

"Not only is it bad science, it also raises major concerns regarding the validity of all NHMRC reviews. That's why this had to be taken to the Ombudsman."



“Positive, high quality studies do exist, and show that homeopathy works for a number of medical conditions such as hay fever, sinusitis and cough. These studies were excluded from the findings, as was all real-world clinical studies, which consistently demonstrate the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and safety of homeopathy in healthcare.”

The report cost taxpayers more than \$800,000.

The documentary *Just One Drop* premiers in Australia later this year.

NHMRC

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is Australia’s leading expert body promoting the development and maintenance of public and individual health standards.

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about>

AHA

The Australian Homoeopathic Association (AHA) is the only national association representing professional homoeopaths in Australia.

<http://www.homeopathyoz.org/about-aha.html>

AHA’s complaint to the Australian Ombudsman was submitted jointly with Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) and the Australian Traditional Medicine Society (ATMS).

Australian Ombudsman

The Australian Ombudsman considers and investigates complaints from people who believe they have been treated unfairly or unreasonably by an Australian Government department or agency.

<http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

The Cochrane Collaboration

Cochrane is a global independent network of researchers, professionals, patients, carers, and people interested in health. Their work is recognized as representing an international gold standard for high quality, trusted information.

<http://www.cochrane.org/about-us>