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CPH Guide 1

Choosing Homeopathy as a Career

This brief guide is designed to help prospective Homeopaths to:

- review their motivation to join an alternative and complementary healing profession
- give them an insight into some of the factors they should consider when making such a choice.

Homeopathy comes from the Greek words homoios (similar) and pathos (suffering). The founding father of homeopathy was Dr. Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843), who formulated the 'principle of similarity', which states that a given substance can cure in a diseased person the symptoms that it produces or causes in a healthy person. It is a well-documented, scientifically based system of approaching health and disease with over 250 years of empirical research behind it.

Homeopaths approach their clients in a holistic way, meaning that the whole of the body and spirit is dealt with, not just the localised disease. It is a safe, effective and gentle approach to health and provides an alternative to drugs and surgery. It can also be used as a complementary approach, working alongside modern medicines, helping patients to deal with the often severe side effects of treatment programmes. Many homeopaths have started to practise after personal experience of the benefits of homeopathy. Some are qualified healthcare professionals who decide to practise outside conventional medicine.

If you:

- have an interest in health issues (your own and others)
- are concerned about current medical approaches to health
- already qualified as a nurse, Doctor, pharmacist, or alternative practitioner and interested in seeking further training in the complementary health sector
- thinking of changing career
- redundant - looking for retraining
- are fed up with your job
- are returning to work after bringing up children/illness etc
- think you have what it takes to be self employed

Then training to become a homeopath could be a good option for you.

What do homeopaths do?

Homeopathy is both a complementary and alternative medicine. Around 3,500 homeopaths practise in the UK. The profile of homeopathy is rising and so opportunities are growing. As more and more people are becoming disillusioned with modern medicine approaches there is a constantly growing demand for safer alternatives to the drug and

surgery based approaches. NHS clinics can now offer homeopathy alongside traditional treatments. There are also NHS Homeopathic Hospitals in London and Edinburgh. However most homeopaths run their own practices

Homeopaths treat people with a wide range of medical conditions. They take a 'holistic' approach – looking at the individual's life as a whole, rather than just their physical symptoms. Clients come for help with a wide variety of complaints – from relatively minor conditions, e.g. headache, toothache or insomnia, to potentially more serious illnesses, e.g. asthma or arthritis. The job entails:

- meeting patients and asking questions about their condition and their wider lives
- choosing the most appropriate method of applying homeopathy.
- choosing a remedy most likely to work for each patient – either a one-off remedy or a course of treatment
- explaining how to take and store the remedy supplied
- advising on diet and other lifestyle factors
- monitoring the patient's progress, through phone calls, email or further consultation
- keeping patient records
- advertising and publicising the practice, perhaps through talks or seminars
- managing the business accounts
- keeping up to date with developments in homeopathy and other health issues.

Homeopathy is a demanding occupation. The holistic nature of treatment means clients may confide personal and emotional problems. Building up a practice, usually through word of mouth, can be an interesting and challenging process. Some practitioners complement their work by offering other therapies, such as massage, aromatherapy, acupuncture, kinesiology or nutrition.

Hours and working environment

Almost all homeopaths are self employed and run their own practice. This may be from their homes, or within a clinic as part of a wider alternative therapy practice. They may also visit patients at home. Increasingly there are opportunities available in GP surgeries or hospitals as the Government has increased the funding for complementary therapies. Although Homeopaths may need to offer appointments in the evenings and weekends for their clients' convenience it is increasingly accepted to deal with clients over the phone and by email and this **really enhances the flexibility for homeopaths to create their own lifestyle**. Each homeopath will decide what the most appropriate hours to run their business are and this varies according to personal circumstances.

It is a very flexible career option. It can be started later in life and one you can continue until you choose to stop. You can work part time only or build up a busy practice and develop in to a full time occupation with earnings increasing with the growth of the practice.

Salary and other benefits

As Homeopathy is a self employed profession these figures are only a guide.

- fees range from approximately £30 to £80 per hour. They may be higher in London and the South East

- a homeopath starting out and working two or three days may earn £16,000 plus p.a. (depending on client base)
- start at around £25,000 per year as a full-time equivalent.
- the highest-earning homeopaths make around £75,000 per year.
- many homeopaths work about 40 weeks a year, leaving time for other interests

Professional Skills - A homeopath needs to:

- have a strong belief in, and commitment to, homeopathy
- an interest in alternative and complementary approaches to health
- a concern about conventional medical treatment methods and their side-effects.
- knowledgeable about disease processes and homeopathic remedies
- responsive to clients' personal issues and problems, but able to stay emotionally uninvolved as a professional
- a good manager

Personal Skills

- an enquiring mind and a willingness to learn
- be good listener, skilled at explaining complex issues in a simple manner
- be able to inspire trust, and form a rapport with all kinds of people
- analytical, non-judgmental
- confident, enthusiastic and energetic to promote and build a practice.

Getting in - There is no set educational route into the field. There are about 30 training providers in the UK. **Courses are not the same and vary widely in their philosophy, teaching approaches and the ability to practice after completion.** (*The following are broad generalisations but should be helpful when deciding on a course that is most suitable for you*). Broadly speaking course providers can be put in the following categories.

1) **Vocational** courses aimed at producing graduates who are capable of setting up and running their own practice

2) **Academic** courses primarily aimed at providing a degree

3) **Eclectic** – a number of courses offer a more esoteric approach and attract people who have a general interest in alternative approaches to health.

All the courses are completely different and have very different standards. You should be careful to compare like with like e.g. degree course with other degree courses. **(If you find you are torn between a Vocational course and an academic course then you are probably using the wrong criteria for choosing a course. (see Guide 2 for help on this).** It is important to get it right as starting a course that does not suit you is both disheartening and very expensive.

One other key difference is **the size of courses** with some course providers running fairly compact courses for a small number of participants. These tend to have very small classes and are run by one or two key tutors. Medium size colleges tend to have better resources and class sizes of between 15 -25. A few have large class sizes (up to seventy) and are mainly lecture based.

It is important to choose one that meets your requirements and aspirations. Also be aware that some colleges tend to have a very big dropout rate – from 70 entering the first year to 20 graduating is a warning sign to look for.

Be aware that almost all homeopaths are self-employed. There are very few who work within the NHS. **You do not (and will not) need a degree to practice** – it is more important to be competent and confident.

Continuing Professional Development and further Training

Homeopaths need to keep up to date with developments in homeopathic research.

There are many seminars and conferences, and the Professional Bodies and Colleges provide information on courses and training events.

Further information

Alliance of Registered Homeopaths, Millbrook, Millbrook Hill, Nutley, East Sussex TN22 3PJ. 08700 736339. Website: www.a-r-h.org – see their booklet '*Which Homeopathy Course?*'

Homeopathic Medical Association, 6 Livingstone Road, Gravesend, Kent DA12 5DZ. 01474 560336. Website: www.the-hma.org

The Society of Homeopaths, 11 Brookfield, Duncan Close, Moulton Park, Northampton NN3 6WL. 0845 450 6611. Website: www.homeopathy-soh.org (see their Register of recognised Courses)

Further reading

If you have found this Guide useful download **Guide No.2 – [Choosing the Homeopathic Training](#) that will best suit my needs from our website:**

<http://www.collegeofpracticalhomeopathy.com>

or contact Pauline or Tony by email on: admin@collegeofpracticalhomeopathy.com

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