

## ORIGINAL PAPER

# Outcomes from homeopathic prescribing in veterinary practice: a prospective, research-targeted, pilot study

RT Mathie\*, L Hansen, MF Elliott and J Hoare

*Faculty of Homeopathy and British Homeopathic Association, Hahnemann House, 29 Park Street West, Luton LU1 3BE, UK*

**Background and aims:** Targeted research development in veterinary homeopathy is properly informed by the systematic collection and analysis of relevant clinical data obtained by its practitioners. We organised a pilot data collection study, in which 8 Faculty of Homeopathy veterinarians collected practice-based clinical and outcomes data over a 6-month period.

**Methods:** A specifically designed *Excel* spreadsheet enabled recording of consecutive clinical appointments under the following headings: date; identity of patient and owner (anonymised); age, sex and species of patient; medical condition/complaint treated; whether confirmed diagnosis, chronic or acute, new or follow-up case; owner-assessed outcome (7-point Likert scale: –3 to +3) compared with first appointment; homeopathic medicine/s prescribed; other medication/s for the condition/complaint. Spreadsheets were submitted monthly by e-mail to the project organisers for data checking, synthesis and analysis.

**Results:** Practitioners submitted data regularly and punctually, and most data cells were completed. 767 individual patients were treated (547 dogs, 155 cats, 50 horses, 5 rabbits, 4 guinea-pigs, 2 birds, 2 goats, 1 cow, and 1 tortoise). Outcome from two or more homeopathic appointments per patient condition was obtained in 539 cases (79.8% showing improvement, 6.1% deterioration, 11.7% no change; outcome not recorded in 2.4% of follow-ups). Strongly positive outcomes (scores of +2 or +3) were achieved in: arthritis and epilepsy in dogs and, in smaller numbers, in atopic dermatitis, gingivitis and hyperthyroidism in cats.

**Conclusions:** Systematic recording of data by veterinarians in clinical practice is feasible and capable of informing future research in veterinary homeopathy. A refined version of the spreadsheet can be used in larger-scale research-targeted veterinary data collection. *Homeopathy* (2007) 96, 27–34.

**Keywords:** systematic data collection; veterinary homeopathy; clinical outcomes; research targeting

## Introduction

The published, peer-reviewed, research evidence base in veterinary homeopathy is slight, comprising fewer than 20 randomised controlled trials (RCTs). More research in this area is indicated and has recently been encouraged.<sup>1</sup> Constructive reviews on the subject are beginning to emerge.<sup>2</sup> RCT research has concentrated mainly on farm livestock rather than on companion

\*Correspondence: Robert T Mathie, British Homeopathic Association, Hahnemann House, 29 Park Street West, Luton LU1 3BE, UK.

E-mail: [rmathie@trusthomeopathy.org](mailto:rmathie@trusthomeopathy.org)

Received 16 June 2006; revised 15 September 2006; accepted 2 October 2006