

Investing in the

The ARH bursary fund

In 2014, the ARH conducted a survey on student membership numbers over the last ten years, and noted a significant decline. Further research showed similar results across most of Europe, with many countries experiencing a 70% drop in student numbers since the beginning of the 2000s. The reasons behind this phenomenon are not totally clear; the negative press generated by the anti-homeopathy campaign (especially here in the UK) may have had some impact but, in all probability, the global financial crisis of 2008 was the principal cause of the dramatic reduction in student numbers. Whatever the reason, most homeopathy course providers have been affected to some extent, and sadly some courses have closed down altogether. However, it is by no means all doom and gloom; the UK Homeopathy Course Providers Forum (HCPF) has taken a collaborative approach to addressing the issue of declining student numbers, and this seems to be slowly (but surely) bearing fruit.

The sharing of expertise has helped members of the HCPF to stay informed about issues currently affecting the sector which, in turn, has helped them to deliver training which is meaningful, relevant and of a high standard. Perhaps even more important, the sharing of ideas has helped the HCPF to develop a PR strategy which is as exciting as it is constructive. This is work in progress, but the

starting point is that, if you want to attract students, you need to demonstrate that homeopathy is a viable career option. With this in mind, the homeopathy career videos were launched in early 2016. They can all be viewed from the home pages of the ARH and *Which Homeopathy Course* (WHC) websites, so they are readily accessible to potential students. The good news is, in terms of student recruitment, something does seem to have shifted, and most courses have reported an improvement in student numbers over the last couple of years.

The ARH works closely with the HCPF, and we are playing an active role in the student recruitment campaign. We recognise that students are the future of our profession, and we believe it is important to invest in that future, both practically and financially. To achieve this, we have created the *Which Homeopathy Course* website, which focuses solely on aspects relevant to the study of homeopathy; there is no charge for course providers to list their course details on the WHC website. We commissioned one of the career videos (featuring the excellent Jo Ketteman) and, in 2015, we established the ARH bursary fund. The bursary fund offers up to five students a year £1,000 each towards their training costs. It is open to students in their second year of training or above, who demonstrate aptitude in their

studies, commitment to practising homeopathy upon completion of their studies, and genuine financial need. Further information and application forms are available from the WHC website, together with a new development; for this academic year (2016-2017) we have introduced a student diaries section.

This year, two students who have received an ARH bursary award are sharing their experience of studying homeopathy in the form of a monthly diary. They are studying at different colleges, and their respective accounts are very diverse, which provides prospective students with a unique insight about what it really means to study homeopathy whilst trying to manage your family, work and life commitments. These diaries tell a compelling and powerful story and, for the next academic year (2017-2018), we will require all successful bursary applicants to provide us with a monthly account of their studies.

Meanwhile, we asked the first four recipients of the ARH bursary awards (2015-2016) to let us know what difference the award has made to them, and also how they feel about the prospect of setting up in practice on completion of their studies. What follows is the personal story of each student. We look forward to publishing future reports, as our profession grows and flourishes!

Karin Mont ARH Chair

future



A wonderful journey by Maria Taylor

I found homeopathy at a point in my life when I needed it the most when, over three years ago, I began to be treated by a local homeopath. Once a variety of symptoms began to disappear and my vital force regained strength, I knew that I had to learn the subject to help other people and their suffering. However, little did I know then that it would in fact be the beginning of healing myself first. Joining the Centre for Homeopathic Education was the first step of a truly wonderful journey in this healing art. From the very first lecture I knew this was where I needed to be and, even though prior to my treatment I had never heard of or read anything about homeopathy, what was taught at college was like a language I once knew; everything fell into place very naturally, including the determination to overcome any obstacles along the way.

As the course progressed, the vast knowledge shared by our lecturers and the books available on the subject made me question if I would ever be able to grasp and apply so much information. Again, I didn't realise at first that, as we learn the subject, we are developing ourselves in a way I never knew possible, at least for people like me with no academic background at all, having left school 30 years ago. The beauty of this, painstaking as it may sometimes seem, is how *grateful* I am for the way I have flourished and the work I have been able to do. Every time, and independently of the grades I have achieved, it has shown me that all my previous limitations and beliefs were merely a product of my past life circumstances.

As my studies advance I see my self-development as something wonderful, clichéd as it may sound; studying homeopathy has changed

For people such as me this bursary is a true blessing

my life in more ways than one, and I have become a better version of myself. Being able to see how it also helps those nearest to me is a blessing I will never cease to be grateful for.

As the course develops and through the knowledge acquired, being able to start treating people and apply what we have learned with the help of our 3rd year supervisor has been a major shift in realising that the student is a developing practitioner. The more I do and learn, the more I fall in love with the subject; seeing the action of our remedies on others and seeing their symptoms improve and disappear is something I believe I will never cease to admire and respect.

As my last year approaches I have a certain tinge of nostalgia about leaving; being surrounded by such brilliant minds in the field, as we are in all our lectures, is a wonderful experience, alongside the colleagues from all over the world we get to know and become friends with, the seminars or webinars given by world experts that we have had the opportunity to attend, and the admin staff that ensures everything is done to help at any time; this homeopathy course is so much more than just being on a course.

One becomes so much more in tune with self, nature and the universe. Teachings from the variety of books we are recommended to read open our minds to such vast knowledge on the subject and so many other areas. I realise I never want to stop learning, this is just the tip of the iceberg; the more you learn the hungrier you become and the more beauty you unfold and see.

It will take time to be able to reach where I can see myself, but I know this is part of the process. Becoming the best possible version of myself is my primary goal – something that must be achieved to become a good practitioner alongside the homeopathic knowledge we acquire. It is also important to have an inquisitive

▷ mind, to keep up with research and what's happening in the allopathic world, and to do my very best with good intentions to provide the best possible care for my patients; this is where I see myself in the near future.

Receiving the news that I had been awarded the bursary from ARH was a very happy day and one I will not forget as, at the time, I was struggling to buy some of the materials necessary. So, being able to acquire all the books I needed plus a small stock of remedies, made a tremendous difference to me as a student and reduced the pressure I was under at the time. The books were vital to my development as a student and future practitioner; up to this point, I had acquired some but, as the course developed, I needed to further my knowledge and have the books the college recommended. When I applied for the bursary I began to picture what I would be able to buy with the funds and how that would improve and help my studies – and it has made such a big difference. Now I have all the recommended books and a nice little stock of remedies and tissue salts; thinking of the future I also bought a homeopathic computer program. Without the bursary, I would still be struggling to buy some of the books and would not have been able to provide some of the remedies for the acute cases I have treated since.

For people such as me this bursary is a true blessing – one that I am extremely grateful for. I kindly thank each and every single one involved in its process for taking the time and dedication to help make this journey into the wonderful world of homeopathy easier and, for some, even possible; may you continue to do so for many, many more years to come. I am sincerely blessed, humbled and grateful to all at CHE and ARH for doing all you do for homeopathy, for us students and practitioners and all the patients we are fortunate to treat.



A Christmas gift
by Yulia Zhdanova

‘Hello, I’m Yulia and I’m a homeopath’ – that’s what I want to be able to say in two years’ time.

Last year I received a bursary award from ARH. It had become the second milestone in my professional journey after enrolling with CHE the year before. As we know, money can be much more than finances, it is a duty and a responsibility, time and energy, recognition and a sign from the universe – and that is my story.

Sometimes life changes dramatically; in one moment, you have time, money, support for spending more time on your hobby and you promise your family that it will never affect your role as a mother and a wife and, in the next moment, your support moves to a new job abroad, your country devalues its currency twice, and one of your three daughters is preparing for university. You then ask yourself in the quiet of the night, ‘What is more important – my own future or the future of my child? My own passion or tutors to give my daughter the best start in life?’ To be honest, each mother knows the answer.

That summer, my daughter won an essay competition and spent a week in a wonderful camp: ‘The best place ever!’ she said. So, I decided to try my luck too; it was the first time I had ever asked for support, I had no idea how it worked. Saying farewell to the

college was the last thing I wanted to do, so I filled out the form and sent it to ARH.

The answer came back before Christmas – thank you, Karin. It was my best Christmas gift, not only because it was really generous but it stopped my endless inner dialogue, the eternal question, my own ‘to be or not to be’. It gave me obligations to other people, outside my family. At the same time, it was recognition of my thoughts and reflections about homeopathy; at least my experience and expectations were valued enough to tell me to keep going!

There were simple questions in the bursary form. What is homeopathy for you? How do you explain it to people who had never heard of it? ... Questions which are answered so many times in college essays but, finally, how you answer them often determines if you have patients; can you pass your passion on to other people, or not?

I wrote in my essay that homeopathy meant a lot to me and my family. I first encountered it due to my son’s developmental problems and, at that moment, I could not have imagined how much it could do for me. Now I’m not afraid of dealing with childhood illnesses,

The existence of people who are interested in your attempts to become a homeopath encourages and inspires

traumas, and small health issues, I cope with everyday routine more optimistically, I don't worry when children fall down, jump, climb and explore the world.

At first it became a way of solving emotional and health issues, but this later developed into a philosophy of life: do not suppress anything, use the simillimum to solve a problem and meet the appearance of previous conditions as a welcome guest, as it means an inner process of healing.

I didn't expect professional education to make me more enthusiastic than I already was. But it did. The second year, when we learned about the theory of miasms, has moved me from the position of a patient to a more professional point. Colds, coughs and even hay fevers are less interesting now, when we can change the level of health not only for a patient but for his next generations.

There were my own first attempts at treating friends (thank you for your courage, guys!) in this year and, of course, it was the most exciting journey. The magic of homeopathy in your own hands plays with self-confidence like a kitten with a bow; you feel yourself the best homeopath ever when the remedy works, and doubt everything – starting with Hahnemann – when it does not.

The second year of homeopathic training has become a secret door to the world of professionals. Lectures about Eizayaga's layers method expanded the boundaries of classical homeopathy, the theory of chronic diseases provided a deeper understanding of the nature of illness, and the introduction to the Code of Ethics reminded me that we live in a complicated world. During the last year, I really felt like a teenager – no more a child (a patient), not yet a grown up (a professional); a lot of enthusiasm with a lack of experience.

As part of the CHE programme, we started clinic participation – an exciting and safe way to experience real cases, to meet real people, not

just on the pages of books, listening to stories without the answer on the last page (the required remedy). We became part of the process of prescribing, crossing our fingers wishing the remedy works. I learnt to reflect on my favourite themes and remedies, and learnt new ones; I learnt how to cope with self-imperfection when a remedy did nothing; and I explored my own weaknesses as a homeopath, reminding myself that we are in training. I developed real emotions and memories about the clinic patients, building up my personal experience.

The value of financial support is immense. The existence of people who are interested in your attempts to become a homeopath encourages and inspires. It was one small step for me as a person, but a leap for a potential homeopath; the leap to a world where your plans become more and more of a reality ... the world where the bursary award, £1,000 from ARH, is like a thousand 'high fives' from people who have walked this path before me, who studied, tried, practised as homeopaths and are ready to share to support a newcomer.



A mission in life by Nighat Rashid

The ARH bursary award has assisted me in participating in events that I would not have been able to afford. I was able to attend the Summer School to learn classical homeopathy. It was extremely useful to see classical homeopathy in practice. I learnt about small remedies, increasing

The bursary enabled me to take my learning experience further than I thought possible

my knowledge, and opened up networking opportunities. It was a great experience and I met homeopaths from around the world, which is priceless. I am extremely grateful as I have been unemployed since 2010 and was finding it hard to pay for supervision and attend courses with such heroes of homeopathy as Robin Murphy. Student finance helps with fees but I needed money for books, supervision, attending clinics and the software. So, this year has been fantastic, as the bursary enabled me to take my learning experience further than I thought possible. Consequently, I would encourage all budding homeopaths to apply for the bursary award; it was the icing on the cake!

I decided to study homeopathy for a number of reasons. The first and foremost was because of my mother. I used to accompany her to a homeopath every two weeks and I saw how the remedies helped her with her pains and infections. However, we were at the mercy of this homeopath as he would not tell us what remedies he was prescribing; therefore, we had to see him every two weeks and take remedies as directed. I dreamt of helping people like my mother because her allopathic medicine was not working at all. My mother suffered for years with diabetes, heart problems, osteoporosis, high cholesterol and urine infections. ▶

▷ She used to get a carrier bag full of medicine. While in hospital she had a major heart attack, and also a stroke which was caused by the cholesterol medicine she was taking at the time (that particular drug was removed from the market because it caused too many strokes in June 2004). The stroke caused left-sided paralysis of her face. We gave her *Arnica* and, within minutes, her mouth straightened up. That was when I decided to study homeopathy.

After my mother's death I researched remedies via the internet or through visiting other homeopaths. My immediate family uses homeopathy and rarely visits allopathic doctors as a consequence of my interest and trust in homeopathic remedies. In 2011, I helped an aunt who had been laid up with sciatica. The doctors said that they could not do anything for her as she was too weak, and gave her morphine patches. I managed to get her up and walking in three months. She went to Saudi Arabia for a religious retreat, and the day she left she took off the morphine patch. I researched on the internet for possible remedies for her symptoms. I gave her *Colocynthis* + *Hypericum* 200c in water. I also gave her the following tissue salts in a 500ml water bottle, to sip throughout the day:

- *Ferrum phosphoricum* – anti-inflammatory for the spinal discs
- *Magnesium phosphate* – for the right-sided shooting pains and to relax the muscle
- *Natrum sulphate* – to support the liver, which assists tendons, ligaments and the back.

The result encouraged me to train as a homeopath as it gave me great satisfaction to be able to help someone. Now it is my mission in life to help people get better. It is fascinating how homeopathy works and I am passionate about it and believe that it works. I am motivated and I love it. My only fear is that I am not good enough!

I am learning all the time and this degree course is excellent and

I really enjoy it although it has not been easy and I have doubted myself many times during the year. I am very lucky to have a family that supports me; they only give positive feedback and encourage me all the time. At home I am the joke at the dinner table, as I have a remedy for everything! I am also a carer for my twin sister who has sarcoidosis, which encourages me to stay focused and committed, as I have seen the negative effects of allopathic drugs again. She is being treated by a homeopath and does not take any allopathic drugs – she relies on homeopathy and alternative medicine.

Finally, I am in my fourth year, and I can see the light at the end of the tunnel – yippee! I know it is going to be a tough year – there is still so much to learn. I look forward to the inspiring college weekends. We are all supportive of each other and we keep in touch via email. There is usually a flurry of emails exchanging ideas for assignments and materia medica exams. It makes you feel that you are not alone, which is extremely helpful. This, too, keeps you focused and committed. It is a wonderful way of learning. All the teachers are great; they guide us gently towards the finish line. They give us small doses of information, which we absorb and adapt.

I have to keep an open mind and heart to proceed forward in this profession. I so want to spread the word about homeopathy because I believe it is the way forward. The doctors have tried with allopathic medicine but now it is time to try with homeopathic remedies that actually help people to heal themselves. I also want to get into research as that is what will bring homeopathy to the forefront. Recently I attended the Society of Homeopaths' conference in Nottingham and saw what great work homeopaths are doing in the UK and around the world. It is a privilege to be studying homeopathy and the satisfaction of helping someone is exhilarating.



A lifelong journey by Erzsebet Konya

As a child, I was always a bit of a rebel and I have always been interested in science. My favourite subject was biology, and I wanted to be a vet, but life changes and I worked for many years in different industries, always working with people.

My father was a busy GP, and my mother was a nurse who worked with him. As a child, I heard my parents talk about sickness, treatments, examinations, drugs and, occasionally, these drugs' or treatments' side effects. There were successes but not always. Conventional medicine was part of our life. Later, as my grandparents were getting older and became ill, they took many drugs, yet my father never treated them holistically. He treated their diabetes and their blood pressure, but never realised that imbalances (physical, emotional, or spiritual) in people's lives could negatively affect their overall health. I recognised that conventional medicine has its own dogmas and paradigms, but I've also learned that studying and understanding medical sciences and basic physiological knowledge is necessary. I had the feeling that something was wrong, something was missing, and felt I would not be able to believe in allopathic treatments and its philosophy. It was a bit like a rebellion against my family.

Meanwhile I became a mother. Health and wellness became more

than my passion; it was vital for me. I familiarised myself with herbal remedies, essential oils, and started learning alternative medicine, auriculotherapy, kinesiology, Bach Flower remedies, Reiki, energetic medicine, massage therapies, Schüssler's Tissue Salts and biofeedback. I started giving my family herbal remedies, homeopathic remedies and occasionally I used essential oils. I treated them with biofeedback as well, but I slowly realised that this has its limitations. I worked in a busy complementary healthcare clinic, and my different experiences helped me realise the effect stress has on people. As a biofeedback technician, I treated many people (some with auriculotherapy), and gathered lots of experience. I met patients suffering the side effects of medication (some on a dozen or so allopathic medicines), and others perhaps under the influence of recreational drugs. Nonetheless I was very happy to treat my family with homeopathy and I thought that I should learn it, because every other skill I have learned and practised has its limitations. These limitations can be a physical treatment area that fails to address deeper, mental causes; behaviour; or issues that result from patients being vaccinated.

I have never stopped learning; I always like to update my knowledge, so I began to look for a way to increase my professional skills. I reached a point where I knew that I needed something deeper and more effective, to address deeper levels. Homeopathy was an element of my studies in my native Hungary, so I had basic knowledge about it and, realising I needed to know more, I began to read all available literature. However, it isn't a simple science and I knew that I needed to increase my practical skills as well so, when I moved to the UK, it was obvious to me that I wanted to study homeopathy. In my country, homeopathy can only be practised by medical doctors. Another reason

I started learning homeopathy was the Royal Family's loyalty towards it and the Queen's constant and unconditional support. I realised that this subject cannot be grasped in a few weekend courses; it is a real science which gives deeper knowledge than anything else I am familiar with, and which Hahnemann spent his whole life developing and improving.

As a single mother looking after two daughters and working full-time, this bursary was a huge help

Now I am a fourth-year student, closer and closer to completing my studies. I realise that studying homeopathy is a lifelong journey; it never ends, and this provides incredible and unlimited happiness. I will never stop studying – I will just study in a different way, through my personal experiences

and patients' feedback. I really enjoy it and look forward to new challenges.

As a single mother looking after two daughters and working full-time, this bursary was a huge help because, when I got it, I was in my third year and about to start my clinic hours. At the time, I treated two private clients whom I was already treating as a student homeopath under supervision, and I spent a lot of my free time on studies. I joined two online webinars: *Effective hay-fever prevention with homeopathy* and *Effective treatment and prevention for cold-sores and herpes*. Both were presented by a London-based homeopath who runs a busy practice and has huge experience in these topics. I also booked some external clinic hours, which was again a great experience and a huge opportunity to treat a special medical condition with homeopathy. This event was very useful, because the main topic was mental illnesses. In the average student clinic, mental cases are rare, but we were able to follow more patients' cases and their healing processes. I was able to start planning my professional website (which isn't ready yet). I have new ideas every day and I constantly revise them. I also bought a Sulis remedy maker; it was part of a bulk purchase, so I took advantage of a huge price drop. I was also able to extend my personal homeopathic library; there were a few expensive books on my wish list, and I waited for the bargain price.

I took part in a remedy proving. This showed me other aspects of homeopathy, helped me to understand and recognise one's own remedy reactions and how a remedy worked, even if I did not know what the remedy was.

I know these are all small steps to build up my professional career as a homeopath, but I can see my future clearly and I feel very confident about it. I will miss college, but I don't have a fear of the future. □