

# WHO recommends against homeopathic treatments for HIV, TB, malaria, influenza, infant diarrhoea

The WHO has warned that people with conditions such as HIV, tuberculosis and malaria should not rely on homeopathic treatments, the BBC reports. The agency was responding to a June letter (full text available here), in which researchers from the Voice of Young Science Network called on the agency "to condemn the promotion of homeopathy for treating TB, infant diarrhoea, influenza, malaria and HIV."

The group, which is part of the Sense About Science organization that advocates for "evidence-based" care, has conveyed the WHO's views in a letter to health ministers, according to the BBC (8/20).

According to a Sense About Science release, the organizations received comments from five WHO officials, which "clearly express WHO's position" (8/21). Mario Raviglione, director of the Stop TB department at the WHO, said, "Our evidence-based WHO TB treatment/management guidelines, as well as the International Standards of Tuberculosis Care do not recommend use of homeopathy." In addition, a spokesman for the WHO department of child and adolescent health and development said of treating diarrhoea in children: "We have found no evidence to date that homeopathy would bring any benefit," the BBC writes (8/20). The release includes additional comments from the associate director of WHO's global malaria program, the HIV/AIDS department interim director and others (8/21).

Robert Hagan, a researcher in biomolecular science at the University of St. Andrews and a member of Voice of Young Science Network, said, "We need governments around the world to recognise the dangers of promoting homeopathy for life-threatening illnesses. We hope that by raising awareness of the WHO's position on homeopathy we will be supporting those people who are taking a stand against these potentially disastrous practices," BBC writes (8/20).

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