



Ghana Homeopathy Project Newsletter

Issue 7

2013

Homeopathy in Ghana: achievements and visions

By Linda Shannon

The last year has been full of lively activity for the Ghana Homeopathy Project: all the groundwork is now bearing fruit and we are ready to expand in all areas.

Accra

PISHAM, in Kasoa near Accra, is the vision of Ghanaian homeopath **Dr Julius Berdie** and is the first training institution of its kind in West Africa. We offer both 2-year Certificate and 4-year Diploma courses in homeopathy and this year eight students completed their Certificate training. Three students are now able to continue to Diploma level and another seven students have just completed their first year. Our team has worked hard on the curriculum to ensure that it expresses PISHAM's clinic-based approach, pioneered by Course Leader **Grace Rhoomes**, a UK trained homeopath now living in Ghana. A new Kasoa Outreach Clinic is an integral part of this approach.



Dr Berdie, Linda Shannon, Jane Parkin and students at PISHAM

PISHAM finds a new home

Due to unforeseen circumstances we had to leave our premises suddenly at the end of last year. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise as PISHAM now has a new rented home lined up which is almost complete. We are about to start a formal accreditation process with the Ghana National Accreditation Board (NAB) and this new building will meet the NAB's requirements. It will also be a much more pleasant working environment for staff and students.



Local women wait for the start of one of our rural clinics.

A vision for the future

As our Ghana partners worked flat out to keep PISHAM going during the upheaval of the move, an unexpected and exciting new development arose. Local community chiefs offered the school 20 acres of community land in exchange for clinics and educational opportunities for local people. This created the idea of a longer term vision, that of building a permanent school for PISHAM on our own land.

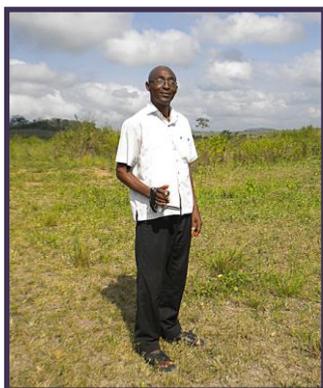
At this point we hesitated - would this be a step too far for our limited resources and people power?

Continued on page 2

Then a timely donation from one of our supporters suddenly made the impossible seem achievable.

We will have enough funds to complete the legal processes involved, secure the land, and start the first phase of building.

This vision is growing and we would like to invite the international homeopathic community to join us in realising it. Imagine a purpose built campus, honouring ecologically sound principles, with classrooms, accommodation, a library, research centre, international conference hall, clinics, and more. This would put Ghana on the homeopathic world map and, above all, it would offer integrated health care to those who most need it.



Dr Julius Berdie, Principal of the Premier International School of Homeopathy and Alternative Medicine (PISHAM) at the community land generously donated to the School by local community leaders

Volunteers

Over the last year nine volunteers have offered their time and skills in Ghana. Four of the volunteers offered integrated homeopathy and podiatry training and clinics. Our students were taught how to dress wounds and, through this training, wound care has become an integral part of the village and urban clinics. Other topics included the study of ethics and homeopathy for the beginning and end of life.

We are now looking for a longer term volunteer who can help our Ghana team with this dynamic work. Do you have experience in homeopathic education and practice? Are you ready for a change? If so please do get in touch with us.

Kumasi and Mafi Seva

Our partner **Bonsu Boaten** provides a resource library for the local homeopathic community in Kumasi and he runs workshops in homeopathy for students and practitioners there. He is also a PISHAM board member and continues to support our work. Meanwhile in Mafi Seva village clinic, in the Volta Region, we have consolidated our work; Director **Emperor Tsamenyi** continues to gain experience and skill. The clinic has a steady stream of clients from the local villages, where word of homeopathy's efficacy has spread.

We offer small bursaries for students from PISHAM to train with Emperor and our international volunteers, all of whom spend time working at Mafi Seva. Emperor has recently been awarded his

Certificate from PISHAM. Sheila Ryan writes more about Mafi Seva on Page 4.

Pastor John continues his work from Ehi, near the Togo border, under the supervision of Ingrid Daniels and Emperor.

Donations

We have received several very generous donations of books and remedies which arrive in Ghana bit by bit as our volunteers fill up their 46kg flight weight allowances. Homeopathic books and remedies are not available in Ghana, so these donations are a vital resource.



Angelika Metzger with some donated repertories

The An Award

Belgian homeopath **An Debyser**, a volunteer in 2012, has donated annual funding for one student to attend a two-week clinical training programme in India with the Drs Bhattacharyea. This year **Martin Gbafa** won the An Award. You can read about his homeopathic journey to India on page 5.

Keeping up with national regulations

Meanwhile, the Ghanaian national regulations changed last year, which means that PISHAM now needs to be mentored by an existing institution for ten instead of four years. Fortunately, **Mike Bridger** of the Contemporary College of Homeopathy, which is our mentor institution for the accreditation programme, agreed to this extra commitment, for which we are very thankful.

Mental Health Research

The Homeopathy Action Trust has awarded us funding to conduct research into the value of homeopathy in mental illness. At present we are conducting an audit to see how many clients present with mental health issues in Ghana. From this we plan to move on to the main body of research and we are in discussion with local psychiatrists about this. The main research will be a team effort guided by the Homeopathy Research Institute.

In Conclusion

We have come far and learnt much. None of this would have been possible without the generosity of every team member, volunteer and donor. We very much appreciate your continuing support. One of our aims for the year ahead is to increase the standing orders coming to the Ghana Homeopathy Project, as these are vital in meeting our ongoing running costs, which increase as the Project grows. Please spread the word☺

Volunteering in Ghana



Lyn and Grace with PISHAM students

Lyn Clark writes:

What I really noticed was how dedicated the students were and what a vision they had for the future of homeopathy in Ghana and I was inspired, also, by the positive views held by the Ghanaian government.

The main topic of my teaching was Ethics. We were able to explore what was culturally specific and what was applicable to all practitioners. My illustrative examples were often culturally specific so we changed them but we noted that the principles stood up across our cultures and disciplines.

This made for some interesting and stimulating discussions and a valuable chance to learn from each other.

Now a member of the School's Board of Directors, I am committed to creating a vibrant college with everyone involved. I am looking forward to returning there to teach again and to being part of developing homeopathy in this country.

Ralf Jeutter (homeopath/podiatrist) and **Claire Duguid** (podiatrist and university lecturer) concentrated on training students in wound care and the treatment of diabetes (an escalating problem in Sub-Saharan Africa). As podiatrists they also introduced podiatry as a specialist area, new to Ghana and welcomed by local health authorities.

Ralf says:

'One of my repeated mantras was that the students need to be fully aware how important their role is in this, especially if they are first point contacts and how essential it is for them to recognise warning signs, e.g. of osteomyelitis, and what is then needed - intravenous antibiotics. In the absence of those, we simply need to do our best and must know the relevant remedies very well. I stressed that homeopathy does not operate in a vacuum, and that the remedy is not everything: education, practical interventions, referrals etc. are all part of their job'.

Following Ralf's visit, Jane Greenwood and Sobia Mansoor, both homeopath/podiatrists, continued the podiatry work, improving the care we are able to offer, especially in the treatment of ulcers. Ralph is due to return to Ghana this summer.



Claire supervises a dressing



Mandy Larkin and her 15-year old daughter, **Sunny**, spent two packed weeks in Ghana experiencing Ghanaian life to the full, from working in the Mafi Seva Clinic to attending a traditional funeral and presenting a seminar to students on the beginning and end of people's lives, looking at the similarities between issues arising at both stages.

"I was cautious about doing subjects that might be controversial but the students are thoughtful people who were really interested in that kind of subject. We looked at personal beliefs and the matching of those with the needs of the patient.

I felt that these subjects raise issues in philosophy, materia medica and clinical practice as well as the students' own personal journeys and perspectives.'



Sheila Ryan reports from Mafi Seva Village Clinic

Mafi Seva village clinic is open 24/7, 52 weeks a year. Emperor and the Seva team have called it 'Last stop clinic' because people turn to the clinic for help from birthing to dying and with every acute and chronic illness in between. No one is turned away. Sometimes people are referred to the local hospital at Adidome and often people arrive from the hospital for help from Seva clinic.

Emperor and the team learn homeopathy through studying and caring for the patients in the clinic. Guidance from visiting volunteer homeopaths and support from regular telephone supervision mean they learn from the unique experience of living in the clinic and seeing the variety and number of patients coming every day and night. This is in addition to the opportunity to attend the regular course in Kasoa and, in Emperor's case, study trips to India. The quality and outcome of this education is truly inspiring. PISHAM students, as well as students and practitioners from all over the world, come to Seva to learn and to support the clinic, making it a valuable resource for all.



Sheila with Emperor, the TBAs and nurse team at Mafi Seva

A family case I witnessed in March this year at Seva: an 18-year old student comes with contracture of the hands and a stubborn, painful ear infection. He can neither hold a pen nor hear very well. Emperor understands that the symptoms must be related expressions of the young man's disease. Through careful case taking, listening to what is unique to this young man, he discovers what it is that troubles the boy who says "If I could make a fist, I would kill my brother for the way he treats our mother. I can't stand to hear him talk to her the way he does!" Emperor says, "If he could make a fist he would perhaps kill his own brother. The disease prevents him from hearing the insults and from doing injury to his brother." He prescribes the remedy *Causticum 200* after which the fists gradually unbend and his ear begins to discharge. This discharge continues for many weeks with lessening of the ear pain and of the contracture.

Not content with this, however, Emperor asks to see the brother in clinic. Along he comes and slouches in the chair. He answers respectfully, though, with monosyllabic answers. Emperor gently probes him about how it is he doesn't go to school and how it is

for him to be in trouble at home. He only says he has an old (right sided) football injury.

He is far from the insolent boy of his brother's and mother's reports. Emperor prescribes *Lycopodium 1M* for the tyrant he is at home and the timid boy he is in front of the outside authority of the community leader in charge of the clinic.

The mother returns before I leave Seva to tell us how she has a changed son at home. He now goes to school and even helps her about the house. She tells us he is so much like his old self that he must have been charmed (meaning in the traditional way by a fetish priest). It's just the everyday magic of homeopathy.

I love to go to Seva and work alongside Emperor and the Traditional Birth Attendants and nurses in the clinic and to talk with Emperor on the phone when I return home. I love to listen to his inspiring stories of the difference homeopathy is making to people's lives.☀

"Please help us by setting up a standing order or give a donation"

How can I help?

The project needs ongoing financial support to make all we do possible

<http://www.justgiving.com/homeopathyinafrica/Donate>
<http://ghanahomeopathy.org/how-you-can-help/>

We also need:

Fundraisers: Can you organise a fundraising event, charity run etc?

Experienced homeopaths, teachers and supervisors to be involved in the training programme. This would involve a two-week trip teaching in Accra and Mafi Seva

Longer term volunteers to maintain the clinics, organise the programme and continue government level discussions. Ideally you will have at least five years practice experience

Less experienced homeopaths to help with specific tasks

Donations of books, remedies, IT equipment and electronic items

Help in the UK

Do you have some time and skills to share? Would you like to take on a role in project management?

We are looking for a fundraiser, administration support, volunteers' guide and video editor

Homeopathy in Africa changes lives - training in Ghana will change yours

By Angie Metzger

Homeopathic clinical training September 13 – 27, 2013

On behalf of the Ghana Homeopathy Project I am very excited to invite you to our second study course in Ghana with Drs. Kalyan and Kalishankar Bhattacharyea from Kolkata, India. The two doctors are renowned homeopaths, diagnosticians and teachers, with more than 35 years of clinical experience. They volunteer their time to support the Project and facilitate this course at Mafi Seva. You are invited to experience homeopathy as the first port of call for patients arriving from far and near to this multidisciplinary community clinic, established ten years ago, and to outreach clinics in the area. There will be scheduled classes in homeopathic philosophy and its application to practice, materia medica and case reviews. You will see the Materia Medica coming to life. Last time we saw some unusual cases, from the aftermath of snake bites to ulcerations, skin growths and many other interesting pathologies not seen in our everyday practices here in the U.K.

Students of PISHAM will join us on this course for some of the time, on full bursary, to enrich our learning together in a cross-cultural context.

We will be staying at the village in simple accommodation; home-cooked food will be prepared for us by local women. There will be time to visit a local market and see something of the Volta region. Living in Mafi Seva gives us the opportunity to get to know some of the villagers, and local children will often visit.

All proceeds from the course will benefit the community health centre and help to support the clinics there.

The last course in 2011 was a great success and here is what participants had to say:

'My trip to Ghana in October 2011 with the Ghana Homeopathy Project was one of the highlights of recent years in my life. Homeopathic teaching was fantastic from the Drs. Battacharyea, and I learned so much through observing them in the clinics and also through treating some patients myself. Being in Africa was a life changing experience, and it was nice to have other homeopaths to share this with'... (Catie S.)

'Hands- on experience means one is involved in the well being of others rather than being an interested observer. The teaching by the two Indian doctors as the clinics are in progress and afterwards is invaluable. This is an experience not to me missed!' (Ingrid D.)

Please contact me on 020 8830 6020 or metzang@aol.com for more information, also see our website: www.ghanahomeopathy.org for the course flyer

My Trip to India

By Martin Gbafa

In the second year of my training at PISHAM one of our international tutors, An Debyser, set up what we affectionately call the 'An Award' ie. funding to sponsor a student to travel to India to attend a course with renowned homeopaths Drs Bhattacharyea. To qualify, students had to present a project proposal that could be used to educate communities about homeopathy. My proposal was based on a consultation I had with an elder in my community and I presented the case to the larger community, including orthodox health professionals.

As a result I was successful in receiving the award and flew to India for the course in March this year.

I learned many things during the trip. I observed their particular style of case-taking and analysis, and an approach to offering homeopathy that is relevant to the community in India. The two doctors have a vast range of experience and knowledge in homeopathy and orthodox medicine. I found that homeopathy is an accepted form of primary health care in India, and is offered across the country in a range of ways. For example, it is offered as a free service in a suburb called Andul, in places of worship known as Ashrams. People with diverse religious beliefs are accessing homeopathy there.



Clinical skills form part of the training in Kolkata

I have returned to Ghana better for the opportunity and touched by the experience which I have shared with my peers at college and others. I can see how homeopathy could have a big impact here for us in Ghana with the support of community and government. I am aware that each homeopath has their own way of looking at a case.

I am glad to be training as a homeopath in Ghana and to be making a contribution to the future of homeopathy here. Many thanks to the An Award - and I hope that other PISHAM students will be able to benefit from this experience in the future☀

Trustee Profile: Veda Alberti



Veda first trained as a homeopath with Peter Chappell before the advent of colleges and went on to co-found, with Anne Larkin, the very successful London College of Classical Homoeopathy in 1984, offering the first fulltime homeopathic course in the UK.

She enjoyed her time as a director and educator and found teaching and mentoring students an extremely rewarding experience.

She continued her studies with George Vithoulkas, Vasilas Geghas, and Jeremy Sherr, and later became Jeremy's administrator, working with him on several provings. She went on to become director of her own School of Classical Homoeopathy while continuing to teach at LCCH until her retirement.

"When I heard about the Ghana Project and the good it is so obviously doing I wanted to contribute in some way. When I was asked if I wanted to be Chair I was thrilled. I am looking forward to my first Trustees meeting in October☀"

Students and clinics at Kasoa

By Grace Rhoomes



Over the year there has been a lot of movement and change in our school and our clinics. We've had a new intake of first years, a sudden move to new premises and a new outreach clinic in

Ofaakor, a suburb of Kasoa, to name just some. There have been lots of challenges but there is the positive outcome of more clarity in our service provision. Although it can feel like we still have a way to go, it also feels as if we're moving in the right direction. Our new, low-cost outdoor clinic in Ofaakor was started in June 2012, and is offered to the community every six weeks. Attendance is good and we continue to have new and follow-up appointments every time.

Our students are gaining in experience as observers, translators, case-takers and dispensers in our mobile homeopathic pharmacy. As our students grow in confidence and skills, we hope to establish a weekly clinic for which they can take responsibility, under supervision, in the final year of our Diploma course.

Mafi Seva

In March we organised a weekend in Mafi Seva attended by students from all three years. Students participated in group case taking and discussion, responding to emergency arrivals appropriately and calmly. Highlights of the weekend were presentations from **Martin Gbafa**, sharing project work that won him an award to attend a course in India (see his article on Page 5) and **Victor Kumi**, who shared his personal reflections on the weekend, reproduced below☀

Reflections on my Seva weekend

'We were offered the opportunity to attend a weekend clinical experience in Mafi Seva in March. I was keen to go - in high spirits and determined to do my best to offer my skills to make the programme a success. I'm coming to the end of my second year on the Diploma course and felt I had learned enough to design a fast approach to taking a case. I also felt that my views on case write-ups and managing the emergencies that came into the clinic were 'right'. I became frustrated and disinterested. Although I was present in the group sessions, everyone noticed that I wasn't engaged with the day's events. Still feeling that my way was the right way, I was supported by my tutor and peers to discuss my feelings in a group tutorial. It wasn't that easy to receive feedback from others, but it was constructive and I always felt valued and listened to. From this I learned a few key things: that the patient comes first and that the process is theirs, not mine; that the amount of time you spend with a patient will vary according to their needs; that there is no need to hurry to take a case history, and perhaps it is my inability to just 'be' with the patient that makes me want to move on quickly; that I am only a second year student, with lots more to learn about myself as I grow internally on my own homeopathic journey☀

Victor Kumi

The Trustees of Homeopathy in Africa

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Anne Simpson: Outgoing Chair, Team Liaison
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Gillian Chang: Mental Health Research Advisor
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Our thanks to ...

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...and the many other supporters who have given funding, books, remedies and supplies

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Anne Simpson, for her dedicated commitment as Chair and her work in team building

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Homeopathy in Africa - UK Registered Charity No 1125981

Send all cheques and Standing Order/Gift Aid forms to: Ghana Homeopathy Project, c/o Linda Shannon, 45 Straits,

PORTLAND, Dorset DT5 1HG

Cheques to be made payable to: **Homeopathy in Africa**

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The GHP team (UK) works in partnership in Ghana to develop Ghanaian Homeopathy through low cost clinics, education and clinical training

<http://www.ghanahomeopathy.org>