



International Journal of Homoeopathic Sciences

E-ISSN: 2616-4493
P-ISSN: 2616-4485
Impact Factor (RJIF): 5.96
www.homoeopathicjournal.com
IJHS 2025; 9(4): 80-84
Received: 21-07-2025
Accepted: 23-08-2025

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Current practices, perceived efficacy, and challenges in the homeopathic management of chronic diseases: A practitioner-based survey

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DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.33545/26164485.2025.v9.i4.B.1892>

Abstract

Background: Homeopathy is frequently used for managing chronic diseases, but evidence on current practice trends and clinical challenges is limited. This study aimed to explore the treatment approaches, perceived clinical efficacy, and barriers encountered by homeopathic practitioners in the management of chronic diseases.

Materials and Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive survey was conducted using a structured google form. Forty-three practitioners participated, providing information on common treatment approaches, diseases types managed, clinical outcome perceptions, and encountered challenges.

Results: Descriptive analysis of the responses revealed that Classical homeopathy was the most preferred approach (60%), followed by blended and clinical homeopathy. Dermatological, gastrointestinal, and gynecological disorders were most frequently treated. While 55.8% of practitioners observed high (75-90%) clinical improvement in patients, patient impatience (71.4%) and public misconceptions (52.4%) were the leading challenges.

Conclusion: Homeopathic practice requires strategic outreach, standardized documentation, and policy-level recognition to ensure sustainable integration and optimal outcomes in chronic care.

Keywords: Homeopathy, clinical practice, practitioner survey, classical homeopathy

1. Introduction

Homeopathy, a system of medicine founded by Samuel Hahnemann in the late 18th century, continues to be widely practiced across many parts of the world, particularly in India, Europe, and South America. Rooted in the principles of “like cures like” and individualized treatment, homeopathy emphasizes stimulating the body’s intrinsic healing capacity through potentized remedies. While acute illnesses have historically been responsive to homeopathic intervention, the treatment of chronic diseases—which often involve deep-seated pathophysiological and psychosocial components—has emerged as a major area of interest and ongoing debate in both academic and clinical settings ^[1].

The rising global burden of chronic non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, arthritis, gastrointestinal disorders, and autoimmune conditions has led to growing interest in complementary and alternative systems of medicine. Patients frequently turn to homeopathy seeking long-term relief with minimal side effects, especially when conventional medicine has failed to provide sustained improvement or quality-of-life benefits. In this context, understanding the prevailing treatment approaches and challenges faced by homeopathic practitioners becomes crucial to bridging the gap between therapeutic potential and practical application ^[2, 3]. Despite its widespread use, homeopathy continues to face significant challenges—both internal, such as remedy selection and lack of clinical documentation, and external, including public misconceptions and skepticism about its scientific validity. Moreover, there is limited contemporary literature that systematically documents the clinical strategies employed by practitioners, their perceived efficacy in chronic care, and the barriers they encounter in day-to-day practice ^[1, 2].

2. Objective of the Study

This study aimed to explore the preferred treatment approaches, types of ailments commonly treated, perceptions of clinical success, and challenges faced in managing chronic conditions by conducting a survey a diverse group of homeopathic practitioners.

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It examines into the evolving landscape of homeopathic practice and provides a foundation for evidence-informed improvements in clinical care, policy advocacy, and patient engagement.

2. Materials and Methods

A structured, anonymous survey was disseminated among registered homeopathic practitioners across institutional and private practice settings using Google form platform. The questionnaire covered four main domains:

- Treatment approaches and philosophical preferences,
- Types of chronic diseases managed,
- Perceptions of clinical efficacy, and

- Challenges encountered during chronic case management.

A total of 43 practitioners responded within two months duration from June 2025 to July 2025. Data were compiled in Excel and analyzed descriptively. Multiple response options were permitted for most questions. Percentages were calculated for each response category.

3. Results

A total of 43 homeopathy practitioners participated in this survey. The majorities were practicing in hospital-based settings (74.4%), followed by those running independent clinics (25.6%).

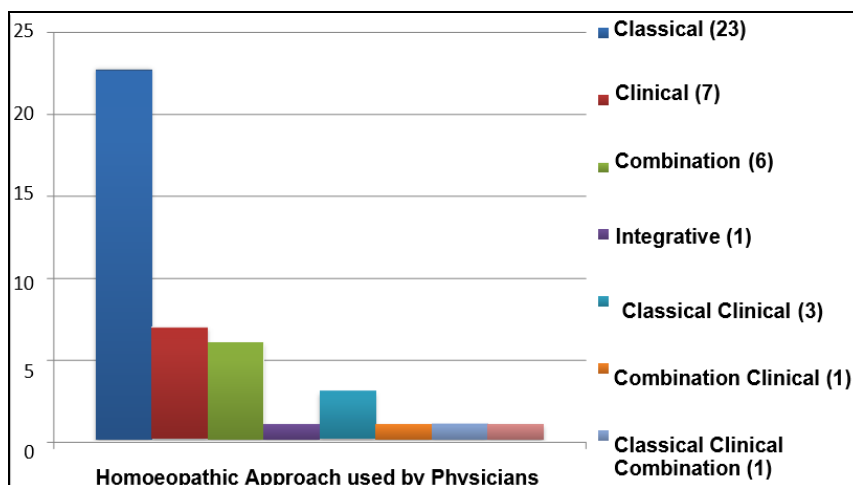


Fig 1: Graphical presentation of treatment approaches used by homeopathic practitioners

The analysis of treatment approach reveals that over 60% of respondents prefer Classical Homoeopathy (Single remedy). This emphasizes a strong adherence to the traditional Hahnemannian principle of “one remedy at a time,” underscoring the dominance of classical philosophy in the current settings. Twenty three respondents (53.5%) of them adopt it solely as exclusive approach whereas 5 respondents (11.6%) mentioned that they use blended approach combining classical homoeopathy with clinical and combination methodologies. These respondents likely tailor their interventions based on case complexity, chronicity and patient response. Clinical Homoeopathy (Diagnosis-based)

was used exclusively by 16.3%, indicating a growing inclination toward disease-specific prescribing. This approach typically relies on conventional diagnostic categories and may be influenced by modern integration efforts in clinical settings. Also, combination remedies were employed by 14%, reflecting either a pragmatic response to patient demand or possibly influences from commercially available multi-remedy formulations. Notably, integrative approaches, where homeopathy is used in conjunction with allopathy or other systems of medicine, were rare, cited by only one practitioner.

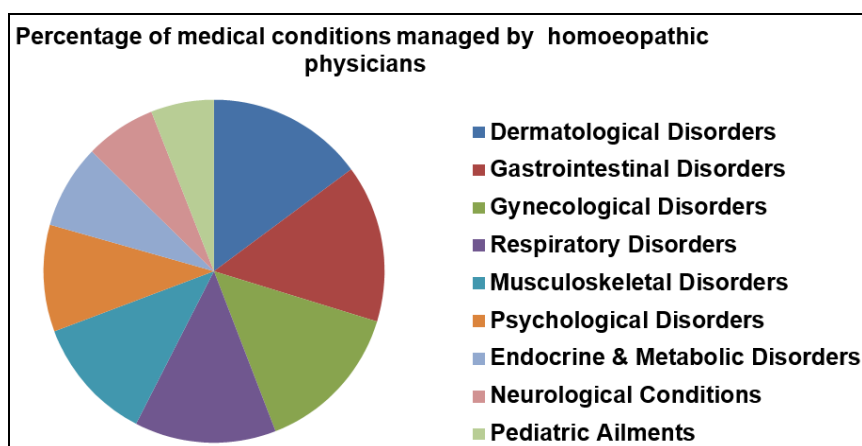


Fig 2: Graphical presentation of most commonly treated medical conditions by homeopathic practitioners

In the present survey, respondents were asked to indicate the types of ailments they most commonly manage in their

clinical practice as mentioned in figure-2. The findings clearly reflect the multisystem utility of homeopathy, with

particular emphasis on chronic, functional, and quality-of-life-related disorders. Survey found that dermatological ailments such as eczema, acne, and psoriasis, along with IBS and digestive disorders each emerged as the medical conditions to be most frequently addressed with 27 out of 43 practitioners (62.8%) treating each. Disorders related to Women's health like PCOS, and dysmenorrhea were treated by 26 practitioners (60.5%). This underscores homeopathy's growing role in managing hormonal and gynecological issues, especially in women reluctant to use hormonal treatments. Respiratory ailments such as asthma and allergic rhinitis were treated by 24 practitioners (55.8%). These are common in both pediatric and adult populations, with homeopathy perceived to reduce recurrence and medication dependency. Chronic musculoskeletal issues including arthritis and fibromyalgia were managed by 21 practitioners (48.8%). Psychological issues such as anxiety, depression, and OCD were managed by 18 practitioners. Endocrine and

Metabolic Disorders (32.6%), Neurological Conditions (27.9%), and Pediatric Ailments (25.6%) were moderately represented. Conditions like thyroid disorders, epilepsy, and pediatric infections or behavioral issues were treated by 11 to 14 respondents. The lower— but still significant— presence of these domains suggests homeopathy is being employed as a supportive or secondary system of care in complex cases.

Also, practitioners were asked to estimate the percentage of their patients in whom they observed noticeable clinical improvement following homeopathic treatment. Out of 43 practitioners, 24 (55.8%) claimed improvement in 75% to 90% of their patients, while 5 practitioners (11.6%) observed clinical improvement in more than 90% of their patients. At the same time, a considerable portion of practitioners (32.6%) report only moderate (50% to 74%) to low (<50%) levels of perceived clinical improvement.

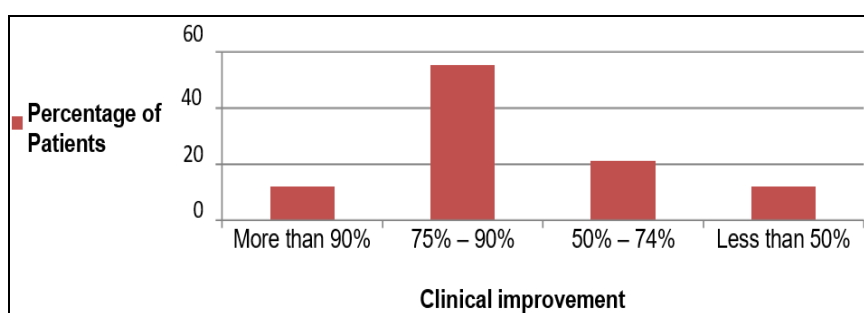


Fig 3: Graphical presentation of clinical improvement noted by homeopathic practitioners in their cases.

A total of 42 homeopathic practitioners responded to the question regarding the challenges they encounter while treating chronic diseases. Respondents were allowed to select multiple applicable options. The most frequently reported challenge was patient impatience and lack of understanding, noted by 71.4% (n=30) of practitioners. This reflects a significant barrier in clinical practice, as homeopathic treatments—particularly for chronic conditions—often require sustained observation and long-term remedy adjustment. The expectation of rapid relief, commonly shaped by experiences with allopathic medicine, may contribute to dissatisfaction or premature discontinuation of treatment. The second most common concern, reported by 52.4% (n=22), was public

misconceptions about homeopathy. This suggests that despite its historical roots and wide usage in some regions, homeopathy continues to face skepticism and misinformation, which may impact patient adherence, trust, and the overall therapeutic alliance.

Clinical and operational challenges were also noted but to a lesser degree. Difficulty in remedy selection was reported by 16.7% (n=7), whereas lack of clinical evidence or literature and time constraints were each cited by 14.3% (n=6) of respondents. These results indicate that while technical limitations exist, they are not the primary obstacles in current practice. Only 2.4% (n=1) reported challenges outside the listed categories, indicating that the survey options effectively captured the major perceived barriers.

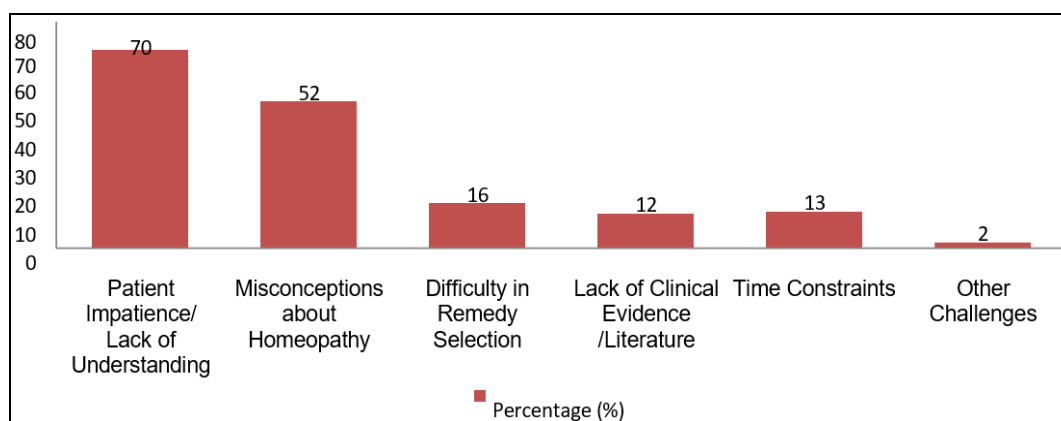


Fig 4: Graphical presentation of challenges faced by homeopathic practitioners

5. Discussion

This study offers a multifaceted view of contemporary

homeopathic practice by exploring treatment philosophies, commonly managed conditions, perceived efficacy, and

barriers faced by practitioners in clinical settings. The results reflect both the continued adherence to traditional homeopathic principles and the evolution of practice styles in response to real-world demands.

The predominance of Classical Homeopathy endorsed by over 60% of practitioners and exclusively followed by more than half, underscores a sustained commitment to Hahnemannian doctrine, which advocates individualized treatment with a single remedy at a time. This finding is consistent with previous literature emphasizing the philosophical depth and clinical tradition in classical practice (Bell *et al.*, 2013). However, the emergence of blended approaches—adopted by 11.6% of respondents—indicates a pragmatic shift toward combining classical method with diagnosis based medicine.

Meanwhile, the uptake of Clinical Homeopathy (16.3%) and combination remedies (14%) points to a growing interest in diagnostic-based and symptom-focused prescribing. These patterns may be influenced by increased integration of homeopathy in hospital settings. The near absence of integrative medicine practices—where homeopathy is combined with allopathy or other systems—suggests either philosophical divergence or systemic barriers preventing interdisciplinary collaborations.

In terms of clinical scope, the study reinforces the breadth of homeopathy's application across multiple systems. Dermatological, gastrointestinal, and gynecological disorders were most frequently treated, each cited by more than 60% of practitioners. These domains often involve chronic or relapsing symptoms with limited long-term solutions in allopathy, positioning homeopathy as a viable alternative. Similarly, respiratory and musculoskeletal conditions were commonly managed, aligning with the literature on homeopathy's role in symptom modulation and reducing pharmacological dependence.

Mental health conditions, including anxiety and depression, were addressed by a notable proportion (41.9%), supporting emerging global trends advocating complementary mental health approaches. Moderately represented categories—such as endocrine, neurological, and pediatric conditions—suggest that while homeopathy is used in complex systemic conditions, it may be more frequently offered as adjunctive rather than primary care in such cases.

Regarding perceived clinical efficacy, a majority of practitioners reported significant improvements (75- 90%) in their patients; with a smaller group (11.6%) observing improvements in over 90% of cases. These self-reported outcomes support the anecdotal strength and patient satisfaction often associated with homeopathy. However, 32.6% of respondents acknowledged only moderate or low levels of improvement, indicating variability in outcomes and possibly reflecting case selection, chronicity, patient compliance, or practitioner experience.

The analysis of treatment challenges provides valuable insights into the systemic and interpersonal difficulties inherent in homeopathic practice. The leading challenge—patient impatience and lack of understanding (71.4%)—reveals a critical disconnect between patient expectations and the philosophy of gradual, constitutional healing inherent to homeopathy. This is compounded by public misconceptions (52.4%), reflecting a broader societal skepticism toward alternative systems of medicine. Such challenges underscore the urgent need for structured patient education, improved communication, and broader advocacy

to clarify the role and evidence base of homeopathy.

Interestingly, clinical constraints such as remedy selection (16.7%), lack of evidence (14.3%), and time limitations (14.3%) were less frequently cited. This suggests that most practitioners feel equipped with sufficient theoretical and practical training but are hindered more by external perceptions and unrealistic timelines.

6. Conclusion

This survey highlights the prevailing trends, challenges, and clinical practices in contemporary homeopathic management of chronic diseases. The dominance of classical homeopathy indicates a strong adherence to traditional principles, although a noticeable minority is adopting blended or clinical approaches to cater to patient needs and case complexity. The multisystem applicability of homeopathy, particularly in managing dermatological, gastrointestinal, gynecological, and respiratory conditions, underscores its relevance in chronic and quality-of-life-driven healthcare.

While a majority of practitioners report high perceived clinical improvement among patients, significant challenges remain—chiefly patient impatience and widespread public misconceptions. These findings reflect the need for enhanced patient education, better communication strategies, and stronger public awareness to align expectations with the therapeutic philosophy of homeopathy.

Additionally, the relatively low concern over remedy selection or evidence gaps suggests that many practitioners are confident in their clinical acumen, but institutional and societal support remains limited. To ensure sustainable integration and optimal outcomes, homeopathic practice must be complemented with outreach, structured documentation, and policy-level acknowledgment of its therapeutic potential in chronic care.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen homeopathic practice and enhance patient outcomes in the treatment of chronic diseases:

1. Enhance Patient Education and Counseling
2. Launch community outreach initiatives and social media campaigns to dispel myths and misconceptions about homeopathy.
3. Facilitate training in clinical documentation and data collection to support outcome-based research.
4. Promote interdisciplinary workshops to focus on remedy differentiation, chronic case management, and to expose homeopaths to advances in diagnostics, psychology, and integrative approaches.
5. Address Time and Resource Constraints:

Conflict of Interest

Not available

Financial Support

Not available

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How to Cite This Article

Saxena V, Sharma V. Current practices, perceived efficacy, and challenges in the homeopathic management of chronic diseases: A practitioner-based survey. *International Journal of Homoeopathic Sciences.* 2025;9(4):80-84

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