National Convention on World Homoeopathy Day: Enhancing quality of research in Homoeopathy

Abstract

A national convention on World Homoeopathy Day was held to commemorate the 262nd birth anniversary of Dr. Samuel Hahnemann on 9th–10th April, 2017 at National Agricultural Science Complex, Pusa, New Delhi, India. The theme of the convention was ‘Enhancing Quality of Research in Homoeopathy’ inspired by the World Health Organization Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014–2023 for achieving Universal Health Coverage. Organised by the Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, an autonomous research organisation of the Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India, the convention witnessed 11 oral presentations and focused group discussions held in parallel in the main and side hall, respectively. On this occasion, Awards of Excellence such as Lifetime Achievement Award, Best Teacher and Researcher Award, Young Scientist Award and Best Research Paper Award were also given.

Keywords: Homoeopathy, National convention, Presentations, Quality, Research

Inauguration

The convention was inaugurated on 10th April 2017 by the Hon’ble Minister of State for AYUSH, Shri. Shripad Yesso Naik and graced by the Hon’ble Member of Parliament, Dr. Manoj Rajoria; Padma Shri Dr. V. K. Gupta, Chairman, Scientific Advisory Committee of the Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH); Shri P. N. Ranjit Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH; Shri A. K. Ganeriwala, Joint Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH; Dr. Lex Rutten, Member of the research committees of the European Committee for Homoeopathy (ECH) and the LMHI; Dr. Martien Brands, Coordinator of scientific committee of the Dutch Doctors Association for Integral Medicine Amsterdam, Netherlands; Dr. Isaac Golden, Research Member, National Institute of Integrative Medicine Director, Australasian College of Hahnemannian Homoeopathy and Dr. Raj K. Manchanda, Director General, CCRH [Figure 1]. The convention witnessed about 400 delegates including key policymakers, esteemed international and national scientists, homoeopathic researchers, practitioners and academicians.

The proceedings began with the traditional lighting of lamp by the dignitaries on the dias. The Hon’ble Minister of AYUSH, Shri. Shripad Naik, in his inaugural address, expressed his pleasure that CCRH is not only sensitising its scientists on contemporary methods of research regularly, but also spreading its wings to collaborate with reputed international and national institutes that are known for their excellence in various streams of science such as quantum physics, bioengineering, virology, chemistry and botany. He informed that the Council is proactively interacting with reputed institutions/universities for joint research projects. So far, many memorandum of understanding (MoUs) have been signed with including Royal London Hospital of Integrated Medicine, U. K; University of Yerevan, Armenia; College of Homoeopaths of Ontario, Canada; University of Maimonides, Argentina. Recently, during the World Integrated Medicine Forum, the Council has signed a MoU with Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Convention of United States for joint research work and harmonisation of Indian and American Homeopathic Pharmacopoeias.

Dr. Manoj Rajoria informed the gathering that the Government of India is putting in all efforts to develop centres of excellence in Homoeopathy. He emphasised on strengthening research infrastructure along with the latest trends in drug validation, prognostic factor research (PFR), role in public health and epidemics by means of high-quality research including National Accreditation Board for Hospital (NABH) accreditation, which is the need of the hour. He also informed the gathering about the revolutionary step taken up by the Government to set four boards under the National Commission for Homoeopathy for the regulation of undergraduate education, postgraduate education, accreditation and assessment of institution and regulation of the practice of the profession. Shri. Rajoria highlighted the importance of research for scientific

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advancement of Homoeopathy. He requested the Honourable AYUSH Minister to expedite the process of development of research centres so that the Council continues to progress in the arena of homoeopathic research and bring about the much-needed research outcomes. He also informed that the Government will assure to extend its full support to propagate homoeopathic system of medicine.

Shri. P. N. Ranjit Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH, informed the gathering about the journey of Homoeopathy in India and how deeply it has rooted itself in the alternate systems of medicine. While addressing, he emphasized the strength of Homoeopathy for its holistic and patient centric approach. He informed that, in the National Health Policy 2017, AYUSH is mentioned as a part of mainstream medicine. He briefed about the four essential pillars of this policy viz. Prevention i.e., sick care to healthcare; Affordable healthcare i.e., universal primary healthcare for all; Empowering citizens and quality patient care i.e., emphasis upon the rights of the patient and Using India’s inherent innovation ability to fight the challenges of healthcare sector.

He concluded his speech with the remarks that we have the entire national public health challenges before us and we have a fair chance to address them and also to find the right place of Homoeopathy.

Shri. A. K. Ganeriwala, Joint Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH, highlighted the various initiatives which the Government is taking towards promoting and projecting the knowledge and science of Homoeopathy with more infrastructure development and more international cooperation to improve global footprints. He also stated that India is a world leader in Homoeopathy in terms of infrastructure, human resource and research facilities.

Dr. Raj K. Manchanda, Director General, CCRH, while introducing the gathering about the theme of the Convention i.e., ‘Enhancing Quality of Research in Homoeopathy’ informed that, since its discovery, Homoeopathy has made a lot of progress but still lot more have to be done. He said that the real tribute to Dr. Hahnemann, the founder of Homoeopathy, from all of us is that we take pledge that we have to contribute to homoeopathic research by whatever way we can. He thanked the AYUSH Minister and Hon’ble Member of Parliament for gracing the occasion.

NEW RELEASES AT A GLANCE
On this occasion, the dignitaries unveiled the new releases of the Council, namely,
1. Documentary on research in Homoeopathy [Figure 2]
2. Souvenir of the convention

CENTRAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH IN HOMOEOPATHY AWARDS
For the very first time, the CCRH formulated Award Scheme 2016–2017 to encourage teachers, doctors, scientists for the development of Homoeopathy as a scientific method of treatment to serve our society.

On the occasion, awards for the year 2016–2017 were distributed under four different categories i.e., Best Research Paper, Young Scientist, Lifetime Achievement and Best Teacher Award by the Hon’ble Minister of AYUSH, Shri. Shripad Yesso Naik, on 10th April, 2017.

The Life Time Achievement Award is bestowed to a person who contributes significantly in unique or innovative findings, theoretical constructs, educational approaches or practices and/or have made exceptional practical application(s) of others’ research. The Life Time Achievement Award in Homoeopathy was awarded to Prof. A. R. Khuda Bukhsh, recognising his distinctive and exemplary contribution to Homoeopathy as a researcher/practitioner [Figure 3].

The award for best teacher and researcher was given to Prof. (Dr.) C. Nayak to give recognition to his significant contribution as a teacher for enhancing homoeopathic knowledge and practices [Figure 4].
The Best Young Scientist Award was awarded for promoting excellence and recognising outstanding contributions made by research scientists for their work in the field of Homoeopathy during the last 5 years preceding the year of the award. The Award was aimed to celebrate individual excellence in research.

Young Scientist Award was jointly conferred to Dr. Debadatta Nayak, RO (H), Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, New Delhi, and Dr. C. R. Patil, Professor and Head, Department of Pharmacology, R. C. Patel Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Shirpur, Dhule, Maharashtra [Figure 5].

The award for the Best Research Paper was in recognition of the importance of published research papers for developing, promoting quality contribution to research and writing among scholars and disseminating knowledge for the benefit of current and future practice of Homoeopathy.

The Best Research Paper award was jointly given to Dr. Kusum Chand, HOD - Homoeopathy, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Delhi and Dr. Archana Narang, Reader NFSG, Department of Surgery, Dr. B. R. Sur Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, Delhi in the clinical research category [Figure 5].

**Scientific Sessions**

**Session 1**

*Key areas and challenges in research in Homoeopathy*

The main hall witnessed the first scientific session chaired by Dr. Martien Brands from the Netherlands and Dr. V. K. Gupta, Chairman, Scientific Advisory Committee, CCRH. The speakers of the session were Dr. Raj K. Manchanda, Director General, CCRH, and Dr. Isaac Golden.

Dr. Raj K. Manchanda spoke on challenges faced by homoeopathic fraternity globally due to its use of ultra-high dilutions and universal application of *Similia* principle. He emphasised on generating the need of scientific evidence for scientific propagation of research outcomes to integrate it in the mainstream national healthcare. He suggested the use of standardised guidelines such as home care for case reporting in Homoeopathy which is needed for the quality case report publication. He emphasised on protocol development with proper literature review, ethical clearance, technical and administrative approval from experts and choosing correct outcome measures. He also highlighted the work done by the CCRH under its various research programmes.

**How to overcome the challenges of epidemic research in Homoeopathy?**

Following Dr. Manchanda’s presentation, Dr. Isaac Golden deliberated upon planning, execution, analysis, publication and promotion for quality of research in Homoeopathy. He emphasised that, for epidemic research, randomised controlled trial (RCT) is not a suitable study design, instead observational and cohort studies need to be conducted in epidemic situation. He suggested Bradford Hill criteria, the CASP Checklist, 7-step checklists for observational research and bias and confounders for improving the quality of observational and cohort studies.

**Session 2**

The second scientific session of the main hall was chaired by Dr. J. D. Daryani, Chairman, Special Committee for Drug Proving, CCRH, and by Dr. Kanwal Sethi, Advisor, Homoeopathy, Ministry of AYUSH. The speakers for the session were Dr. (Prof.) C. Nayak, Former Director General, CCRH; Dr. L. K. Nanda, Former Principal, Dr. A. C. Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, Bhubaneswar and Dr. Vandana Siroha, Deputy Director, NABH, Quality Council of India (QCI).

**Strengthening college and hospital infrastructure for undertaking research**

Dr. (Prof.) C. Nayak deliberated upon the need and process for strengthening infrastructure in the homoeopathic colleges for undertaking research. He gave specific inputs on the steps for colleges to build up their infrastructure on one hand and
inculcate research aptitude in the faculty and students on the other hand. The possible domains of research in colleges and pre-requisites for initiating research departments were also discussed. He concluded by saying that research should be comprehensive, comprehensible, result oriented and of high quality.

A case report on ‘petrous meningioma’

Dr. L.K. Nanda presented a clinical case report on petrous meningioma. He detailed the approach to treatment undertaken in the cases and shared his clinical experiences. He discussed the outcomes of 3 CNS cases regarding its homoeopathic and medicine based perspectives.

NABH accreditation of homoeopathy hospitals

Dr. Vandana Siroha discussed the NABH accreditation in homoeopathic hospitals. She detailed the importance of quality accreditation and how the QCI, through the NABH, has developed quality standards for medical institutes in the country. She also apprised about the accreditation and certification programmes being run by the NABH and the educational and training mechanism for the organisation to facilitate accreditation activities.

Session 3

The third scientific session was chaired jointly by Dr. N. Radha Das, former advisor, Homoeopathy, Ministry of AYUSH, and Dr. Ashok Sharma, Chief Medical Officer, NFSG. The key speakers of the session were Dr. Martien Brands from the Netherlands and Dr. Anil Khurana, Deputy Director General, CCRH.

High-quality data presentation

Dr. Martien Brands started his presentation by highlighting the gaps between Homoeopathy and conventional medicine. He said that Homoeopathy had a different discourse from conventional medicine, as conventional medicine is 'organ narrative', while Homoeopathy is 'systemic narrative'. Dr. Brands then took the audience through a software tour by showing various links including the login page, data recording page, diagnosis page, investigation and treatment plan page, differential diagnosis page and finally the consultation page. He then discussed how this software can be a great tool in India and how it can be of help to CCRH researchers in today's digital world.

Quality indicators for clinical trials in Homoeopathy

Dr. Anil Khurana discussed the safety issues and efficacy of clinical trials. He defined the clinical trial and discussed about the flow of data process in the clinical trial. He spoke about the International Conference on Harmonisation that regulates the clinical trials involving human subjects and its development to internationalise and standardise the clinical trials. He enumerated the six domains of model validity for homoeopathic clinical trials. He concluded the session by summarising the key points to bring about high-quality clinical trials and stated that the outcome of a clinical study in a most methodical and scientific way will yield useful results to the profession and in the larger interest of public benefit.

Session 4

The fourth scientific session was conducted in the main hall under the chairmanship of Dr. R. K. Marwah, retired senior consultant, Endocrinology, International Life Sciences Institute (India) and Advisor Projects, Department of Endocrinology, AIIMS, and Dr. Raj K. Manchanda, Director General, CCRH. Dr. Kusum S. Chand, senior physician and Consultant, Head of Department of Homoeopathy at Max Healthcare, and Dr. Anisur Rahman Khuda Bukhsh, Head, Department of Zoology, University of Kalyani, Integrated management of chronic diseases deliberated in the session.

Integrated management of chronic diseases

Dr. Kusum S. Chand elaborated through two evidence-based case reports and recommended that integrated approach to the treatment of chronic disease may be the answer in this era of drug resistance and low immunity.

Present status of gene regulatory hypothesis to explain the molecular mechanism of biological action of Homoeopathic drugs: Scope of further research

Dr. Anisur Rahman Khuda Bukhsh spoke on the major issues in Homoeopathy and the need for authentic scientific explanations, namely, ultra-high dilutions, physico-chemical aspect or mechanism of action and principle similia similibus curentur. He also shared the results of some clinical controlled studies conducted with scientifically accepted protocols.

Session 5

This session was chaired by Dr. Isaac Golden from Australia and Dr. Anil Khurana, Deputy Director General, CCRH. The key speakers of the session were Dr. Lex Rutten from the Netherlands and Dr. K. M. Dhawale, Principal, Dr. M. L. Dhawale Memorial Homoeopathic Institute, Palghar, Mumbai.

Prognostic factor research

Dr. Lex Rutten in his opening remarks stated that more than 150 RCTs have been conducted in the profession so far which convey that proof of Homoeopathy is not inferior to proof of conventional medicine. Despite the immense efforts and costs involved, RCTs have not been able to gain much scientific recognition for Homoeopathy and neither have they done any good to the patients. He explained about Bayes' theorem and PFR which can help to validate the symptoms of the medicines and the probability that the medicine will work when prescribed on the basis of the symptom. This research can help the homoeopathic community gain considerable respect from the scientific community and at the same time bring science closer to Homoeopathy's own scientific identity i.e., personalised medicine. In conventional medicine, though PFR is still little developed, there is growing awareness that prognosis of the effect of a medicine in the individual patient is more important than diagnosis. In addition, suggestions were made by speaker that, based on the results of the PFR, treatment algorithms can be
made enabling doctors with little knowledge of Homoeopathy to successfully prescribe Homoeopathy instead of antibiotics in this era of increasing antimicrobial resistance.

Training through action learning: Implanting quality within the researcher

Dr. Kumar Dhawale spoke about the qualities that a homoeopathic researcher should possess. While mentioning about the qualities of a homoeopathic researcher, he explained that, while a good clinician does introspect and review his/her work in his/her own way and in his/her own space, a researcher aims to generate/validate knowledge in a planned way aiming to address the pressing issues of the day and beyond. Based on all these experiences and results over the past 9 years, an online course in ‘Homoeopathic Research Methodology and Biostatistics’ which would help research organisations to suitably equip their research workers at different levels was developed, the outline of which was discussed by Dr. Dhawale.

In his closing remarks, he emphasised on the need for appropriately organised research training in homoeopathic research which should be based on action learning principles [Figure 5].

FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION

A parallel group discussion was also organized on Day 1 in the Conference Room on A Preliminary Report of the NITI Aayog Committee on the Reform of the Homoeopathy Central Council Act, 1973.

The key discussants were Dr. V.K. Gupta, Chairman, Scientific Advisory Committee, Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, Dr. Raj K. Manchanda, Director General, Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, Dr. C. Nayak, Former Director General, Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, Dr. J.D. Daryani, Chairman, Drug Proving Committee, Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, Dr. V.K. Chauhan, Former Principal, Dr. B. R. Sur Homoeopathic Medical College, Hospital and Research Centre, Dr. V.K. Khanna, Member, Governing Body, Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, Dr. K. S. Sethi, Deputy Adviser (H), Ministry of AYUSH, Dr. L.K. Nanda, Former Principal, Dr. A. C. Homoeopathic Medical College & Hospital, Bhubaneshwar, Dr. K. M. Dhawale, Principal of the Dr. M. L. Dhawale Memorial Homoeopathic Institute, Dr. Chinta Srinivas Rao, Assistant Adviser(H), Ministry of AYUSH and Dr. Manish Bhartiya, Editor, Vital Informer.

With regard to the composition of the ACH (Advisory Council for Homoeopathy) & NCH (National Commission for Homoeopathy), the discussants were of the opinion to have more members from the homoeopathic fraternity rather from allied fields. The discussants vouched for a common AYUSH NEET examination which would improve the quality of students entering AYUSH streams. Lot of deliberations were done on the various aspects of the Bill by the discussants and DG, CCRH moderated the entire session.

A short discussion on the National Health Policy 2017 and inclusion of AYUSH systems in it was also conducted laying emphasis on the role of Homoeopathy in school health programmes by providing a Health care kit; developing protocol for mainstreaming AYUSH as an integrated medical care; need for integrated courses for Indian System of Medicine; Modern Science; need to standardize and validate and establish a robust and effective quality control mechanism for AYUSH drugs; to promote innovation, discovery and translational research on drugs in AYUSH and to allocate adequate funds towards it. Research on social determinants of health along with neglected health issues and to initiate drug researches on critical diseases such as TB, HIV/AIDS, and Malaria.

The Day 2 witnessed a group discussion on ‘Indian Perspective of Regulation of Homeopathic Medicinal Products’ chaired by Shri. Anil Kumar Ganeriwala, Joint Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH; Dr. S. P. Singh, Former Advisor (Hom.), Ministry of AYUSH; Dr. S. K. Agarwal, Advisor (Ay.), Ministry of AYUSH; Dr. D. C. Katoh, Advisor (Ay.), Ministry of AYUSH.
At the outset, Dr. Srinivas Rao presented the public response received on the draft notification of amendments in Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1945, which was notified in the month of February, 2017. Mr. Praveen Kumar Mittal informed about how the fairs and melas help the exchange of ideas with researchers and manufacturers. He informed about International Arogya Wellness Fair going to be held in December and invited all the stakeholders and industrialists to participate actively, which will publicise the Indian homoeopathic industry globally.

Dr. Rajeev Kumar Sharma presented the details of Vol. I-X of Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia of India (HPI), he stressed on the aim to develop the Finished Product Standards (FPSs) studies of the drug. The HPI has published FPS studies for more than 250 drugs and developing more, he added. Dr. G. V. R. Joseph presented the mandate of the HPL for testing and checking the samples received from various manufacturers, focused on challenges faced by Homoeopathy for standardisation and availability of raw materials. In his concluding remarks, Shri Anil Kumar Ganeriwala emphasised on the potency and good manufacturing practice for homoeopathic drugs, not to sell in loose packing and finalisation of new clinical trial document which has to be placed in the next meeting of Drug Technical Advisory Board. Dr. Raj K. Manchanda stressed on the safety and efficacy issue, which is mentioned in the Schedule Y of Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1945, and Schedule Y1 is being drafted for homoeopathic drugs. He also suggested to connect PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry with the FICCI. Converging of Pharmacopoeia is needed to be done, he added. He presented the recommendations/lessons of World Integrated Medicine Forum (WIMF) held on 23rd–24th February, 2017, at Hotel Ashok, New Delhi. It was recommended by attendees from India and abroad to conduct this kind of forum after every 2 years. It was also informed that a MoU has been signed with Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States during the WIMF. In concluding remarks, he shared that the Council is doing the research in respect to validation and scientifically justified manners to grow Homoeopathy globally.

Dr. S. P. Singh added that, in HPI, caution is mentioned for toxic drugs, in the lines of safety of the drug. Dr. D. R. Lohar suggested taking help from industries to provide raw drug materials and related data for preparation and for laying down the standards. Dr. S. P. S. Bakshi shared the problem of non-availability of established laboratories to prepare and for checking of the quality standards of the drugs.

**Recommendations of the Convention**

- There is a need of quality and evidence-based researches in Homoeopathy, and thus research in Homoeopathy should be organised and planned properly.
- Researchers should focus on generating scientific evidence for scientific plausibility of Homoeopathy, safety and quality of homoeopathic medicine and propagation of research outcomes, thereby integration in national healthcare.
- Use of standardised guidelines such as HOM-CASE for case reporting in Homoeopathy which is needed for the quality case report publications.
- Focus on planning, execution, analysis, publication and promotion for quality research in Homoeopathy.
- Improving the quality of observational and cohort studies.
- The dose and potency of homoeopathic medicine with respect to severity of the disease and intensity of exposure.
- To improve the quality of research in epidemic situation using appropriate study design.
- Strengthening infrastructure in the homoeopathic colleges for undertaking research.
- Research should be comprehensive, comprehensible, result oriented and of high quality.
- Role of Homoeopathy in changing antibiotic sensitivity must be evaluated and explored.
- More scientific exploration may be carried out to understand their possible role and mechanism of biological action of these remedies.
- Replication of extensive pioneering research findings needed to be verified by independent and duly qualified researchers with our protocols as well as with some added protocols.
- There is a need for PFR which can be used to develop...
treatment algorithms enabling doctors with little knowledge of Homoeopathy to successfully prescribe Homoeopathy instead of even antibiotics in this era of developing antimicrobial resistance

- There is a need to develop an in-house JRF training programme for homoeopathic researchers based on the principles of action learning (Look-Think-Act)
- Improvement in the teaching curriculum of research methodology and biostatistics
- Need for appropriately organised research training in homoeopathic research which should be based on action learning principles
- To strengthen the homoeopathic industry in India, it needs to form a separate Drug Controller General of India as India is in an advantageous situation to take a lead for the harmonisation of drug laws as Homoeopathy drug sector is well established in the country. Since there is a need to develop global strategies for the quality assurance of homoeopathic medicines worldwide, India can spearhead this drive through its experiences on this front
- There is a wide variation of pharmacopoeial standards and drug laws of Homoeopathy in different countries. There is a need to improve the HPI with inclusion of missed parameters or revision of monographs should be taken up to harmonise these for common standards globally
- Intensive interactions among all the stakeholders which include drug regulators, pharmacopoeial committees and homoeopathic drug industries of various countries are required to discuss the present scenario and formulate appropriate strategies to develop standards of homoeopathic drug industry and to ensure availability of the medicines in all the countries, especially wherever there is a demand.

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Conflicts of interest
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Nationale Tagung zum Welt-Homöopathie-Tag: Verbesserung der Qualität in der Homöopathieforschung

Abstrakt

Convención nacional en el Día Mundial de la Homeopatía: Mejora de la calidad de la investigación en homeopatía

Resumen

Para conmemorar el 262 aniversario del nacimiento del Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, se celebró una Convención Nacional en el Día Mundial de la Homeopatía los días 9 y 10 de abril de 2017 en el Complejo Nacional de Ciencias Agrícolas, Pusa, Nueva Delhi, India. El tema de la Convención fue ‘Enhancing Quality of Research in Homoeopathy’ (Mejora de la calidad de la investigación en homeopatía) que se inspiró en la Estrategia de la Medicina Tradicional de la Organización Mundial de la Salud 2014-2023 (World Health Organization Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014–2023), cuyo objetivo es una cobertura universal de la salud. La convención fue organizada por el CCRH (Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy), un centro de investigación autónomo del Ministerio de AYUSH, Gobierno de la India. En la convención se presentaron 11 ponencias orales y se realizaron discusiones de grupo sobre determinados temas, que se sostuvieron paralelamente en la sala principal y la secundaria, respectivamente. En esta ocasión, también se concedieron diferentes premios a la excelencia, como Lifetime Achievement Award (Premio a los logros de toda una vida), Best Teacher and Researcher Award (premio al mejor profesor e investigador), Young Scientist Award (premio a científicos jóvenes) y Best Research Paper Award (premio al mejor artículo de investigación).

Convention nationale à l’occasion de la journée mondiale de l’homéopathie : améliorer la qualité de la recherche en Homéopathie

Résumé