YOUR HEALTH YOUR CHOICE

Senate Petition

To the Honourable President and members of the Senate in Parliament assembled: The petition of the undersigned shows: In 2015, the National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) published its Review of the evidence on homeopathy, concluding that there is 'no reliable evidence'. The NHMRC initiated its Review to "engineer" a result that aligned with its previously stated prejudicial viewpoint against homeopathy, rather than impartially assessing the evidence using accepted methods. For example, its Chairman stated: "Let me assure you that NHMRC does not support homeopathy" before the Review began and the CEO, who instigated the Review, labelled the sector "snake oil merchants" and "charlatans". This prejudicial stance resulted in distortion of administrative and scientific processes, including:

- Not declaring or managing multiple anti-homeopathy conflicts of interest involved in the Review, in breach of NHMRC and Australian Public Service conflict of interest policies.
- Not appointing or involving any homeopathy discipline or research experts, in breach of mandatory NHMRC quality assurance standards.
- Concealing from public knowledge the existence and findings of an earlier, good quality review (First Review) of the evidence on homeopathy, which was terminated in August 2012.
- Concealing taxpayer expenditure on the First Review process and the reasons for its termination.
- Undertaking post-hoc manipulations to the methodology of the (published) Second Review, which directly prevented 97% of the included evidence from contributing to the findings.
- In doing so, retrospectively creating and applying arbitrary criteria not recognised by any scientific standards; not applied to any other category of medicine (including by NHMRC).
- Not disclosing any of the post-hoc changes to the methodology, despite their forming the basis of the Review's published findings and overall conclusion.
- Ignoring and withholding expert peer reviewer advice disputing the methods and findings, including advice that "no reliable evidence does not seem an accurate reflection of the body of evidence". More information can be accessed at www.nhmrchomeopathy.com

The NHMRC misled the public by claiming that it employed 'accepted, standardised methods' for reviewing health evidence, when it abandoned these methods midway through the Review. The NHMRC also conducted an ineffectual public consultation process, whereby external parties were invited to submit additional evidence 'it may have missed' (comprising a quarter of the eligible data), all of which was then excluded from the Review's findings on the basis that it was submitted by external parties. This was not disclosed in NHMRCs reporting of the findings to the public. **Policy makers and regulators such as the Therapeutic Goods Administration and the Department of Health are now inappropriately citing this flawed Review for proposed regulatory changes**. This administratively flawed and scientifically biased Review has unjustly caused ongoing harm to the homeopathy sector. A Senate inquiry into NHMRCs misconduct is requested to restore public confidence in its ability to ethically and impartially inform the public on matters relating to health. The petitioners request that the Senate:

- Investigate the NHMRCs misuse of taxpayer funding, including maladministration and scientific misconduct in its 2010-2015 review of the evidence on homeopathy.
- Compel the NHMRC to make public the original 2012 Homeopathy Review ('A Systematic Review of the Evidence on the Effectiveness of Homeopathy') for public and expert scrutiny.
- Compel the NHMRC to explain and justify why the original 2012 Homeopathy Review was terminated and its findings suppressed.
- Ensure this flawed Review is not used as a credible policy document to inform health policy.

First Name	Last Name	Email	Postcode	Signature

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