

## Key Points for the Press

- Of 7 challenges the ASA suggested we should accept without argument, 6 were not upheld
  - 1 was withdrawn
  - 1 was completely re-written 7 months into the process
  - 1 was upheld after refusing to read the evidence
- The majority of the challenges which were upheld were
  - Based on arguments which are invalid or contradictory
    - The ASA rejected studies based on thousands or millions of people, but ads frequently cite evidence such as “73% of 113 people”
    - The ASA rejected evidence because there was no explanation of how homeopathy works, but Paracetamol is regularly advertised, and its method of action is unknown
    - The ASA rejected evidence based on the opinions of patients about their own health when 76% of the information needed for diagnosis comes from the patient
  - Based on discredited evidence
    - The *Evidence Check*
    - An unreferenced “substantial review of over 100 placebo controlled trials”
  - Based on ignoring or misrepresenting the evidence
    - The ASA did not read *Halloween Science*
    - The ASA suppressed or misrepresented evidence about Sense About Science
- The ASA has claimed that “the ASA/CAP has yet to see significant medical evidence for the efficacy of homeopathy”
  - In 2008 the Society of Homeopaths and British Homeopathic Association sent such evidence to the ASA and CAP
  - In 2011 the ASA still said that “CAP was unable to source an expert who was qualified, independent, able and available to review your client’s evidence”.
- The ASA admits that it is not competent to assess the validity of evidence for homeopathy, but
  - It has challenged the validity of such evidence from those with expertise
  - No outside expertise was employed in this case
  - No evidence was provided of expertise within the ASA
- The ASA has treated homeopathy as though it were a new, ‘controversial’ or ‘breakthrough’ treatment, but
  - Homeopathy has been around for over 200 years
  - Homeopathy has been incorporated in the NHS since its inception over 60 years ago
  - Around the world homeopathy is recognised more or less officially as part of medical practice in 26 countries
    - Europe (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and the UK)
    - Central and South America (Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador and Mexico)
    - Asia (India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka)
    - In Brazil, India, Mexico, Cuba, Pakistan and Sri Lanka homeopathy is integrated into the national healthcare system
  - H:MC21’s evidence was derived from medical practitioners qualified in both conventional medicine and homeopathy and working for national health services.
  - There is no evidence of a real controversy, other than between commercial interests
- Opposition to homeopathy comes from people who are unqualified or poorly informed, or who have vested interests
  - Sense About Science: Chris Tyler, Simon Singh, Tracey Brown
  - Edzard Ernst, Ben Goldacre, David Colquhoun, Michael Baum, etc.