

Pharmacopoea Pauperum 1799

Medicines for the poor in the Danish capital Copenhagen

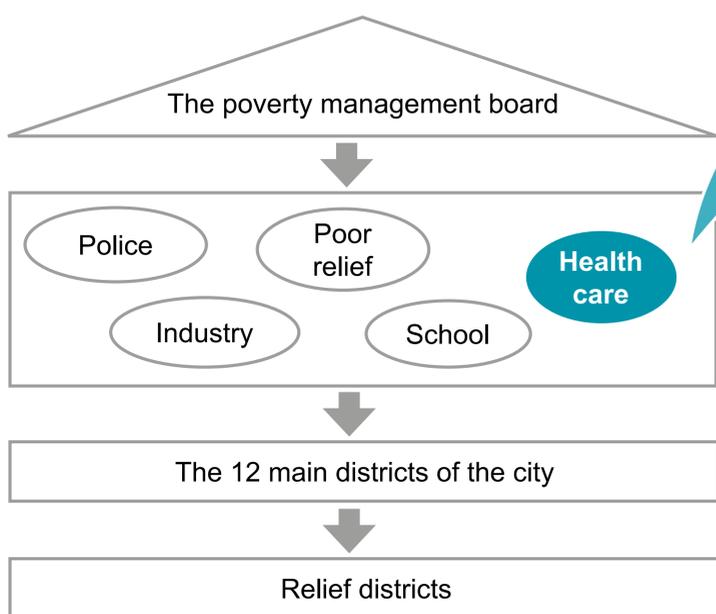
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In connection with the poverty regulation in Copenhagen 1799 the Collegium Medicum composed a Pharmacopoeia for poor people the pharmacopoeia contained all necessary raw materials and prepared medicines which, could be obtained at cheap prices. When physicians would prescribe medicines at public expense, they should choose among the medicaments listed in the Pharmacopoeia Pauperum.

The Poverty regulation in Copenhagen 1799 divided the city into 12 major districts; every district had a director. Each major district was divided into a number of relief districts with each of their own deputies. The Poverty Management Board oversaw the general management and kept an eye on the five specialized commissions. Here there would be focus on the health care commission.

The poverty regulation in Copenhagen 1799



Disease treatment around 1800

Frederik Ludvig Bang was an experienced physician from Frederiks Hospital in Copenhagen and a member of the Collegium Medicum. He wrote the book "Praxis medica systematice exposita" in 1789, including a diary with a selection of disease stories. The study shows that Bangs treated his patients with many of the drugs listed in the Pharmacopoeia for the Poor 1799. He did not unilaterally follow any pathological system, and his medical record was – as he himself emphasized – a guide in the practice of practical medicine. Doctor Frederik Ludvig Bang had a humoral pathological mind set and referred to Hippocrates, Boerhaave and Sydenham. He had a contagionistic perception of infection. He divided the diseases of the day into five main categories, which provides a way to understand the selection of the drugs for the Pharmacopoeia Pauperum.

Bang's disease categories were:

- 1) The fever diseases
- 2) Pain without fever
- 3) Nerve diseases
- 4) Errors in the excretion device
- 5) Deficiency diseases that led to general weakness

References:

Bang, Ludvig; "Praxis medica Systematice exposita, selectis diarii Nosocomii Fredericiani illustrata (1789)
Mangor, Elovarius; Armen-Apotheke, 1799
Collegio Medico; Pharmacopoea Pauperum, 1799
Rigsarkivet; Collegium Medicum Regium - Korrespondanceprotokol
Rigsarkivet; Collegium Medicum Regium – Indkomne sager samt koncepter

An Idea to save money on drugs

The head of the health commission Doctor Chr. E. Mangor made an unofficial pharmacopoeia for the poor: Armen-Apotheke

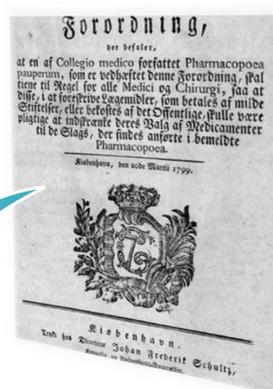
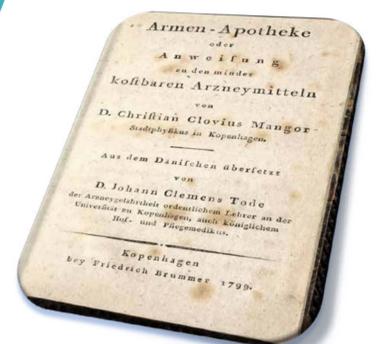
Advice to physicians in the Armen-Apotheke

Mangor gave directions to the district physicians:

- How to act as a responsible physician
- How to select the right drug for a treatment
- How to substitute drugs
- How to dose drugs
- He also gave some moral advice

Criticism of the Armen-Apotheke

The health authorities (Collegium Medicum) asked the district physicians to criticize doctor Mangor's "Armen-Apotheke". The purpose was to make an effective official Pharmacopoeia Pauperum.



The Collegium Medicum

The Collegium Medicum announced in the minute book that they would not teach the district physicians what medicines they should prescribe, and how they should be dosed because the physicians were well educated and experienced. The treatment of the physicians was individual and could not be standardized with a good result.

The pharmacopoeia for the poor should provide fast, safe and cheap treatment

The Collegium Medicum (the health authorities) assessed the criticism from the physicians and wrote the official Pharmacopoeia Pauperum in 1799. The pharmacopoeia listed 224 drugs, eighty percent of which were from the plant kingdom, fifteen percent from the mineral kingdom and five percent from the animal kingdom. The physicians complained that the head of the health care commission, Mangor suspected them for using too expensive drugs in their drug treatment. They were embarrassed by the morals in the Armen-Apotheke. They also pointed out that Dr. Mangor had simplified the pharmaceutical forms too much in the Armen-Apotheke, so there was a risk for the drug compliance. The physicians also pointed out that it was problematic that Mangor would try to replace specific drug in some cases – as chinarind with oakrind. This would delay the treatment and lead to an increased cost. A good Pharmacopoeia should provide fast, safe and cheap treatment.