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im Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft
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In spring 1997, the board of directors of the Carstens Foundation decided to expand its programs and promotion and to operate on an international scale. For this purpose the following information was compiled as an up-to-date overview of the Foundation's activities.

Tasks and Objectives

The Carstens Foundation was established in 1981 by the late President of Germany Karl Carstens (1914–1992) and his wife Veronica Carstens MD.

The Foundation supports science and research, promotes continued medical education and the new academic generation in the fields of naturopathy, homeopathy and unconventional or complementary methods in medicine. The emphasis of the Foundation is on homeopathy as well as on traditional European naturopathy, especially phytomedicine.

Basic research, clinical research, epidemiological studies and theoretical medicine are also supported. In the field of promoting continued medical education emphasis is placed on the publication and distribution of scientific results on homeopathy and complementary medicine.

In addition, great importance is placed on supporting a new generation of academics: scholarships for doctorates are awarded at the current rate of 5 to 8 a year, and every student initiative for the establishment of teaching homeopathy and complementary medicine at universities is supported and encouraged.

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The main objective of the Foundation is the integration and broader acceptance of homeopathy and complementary medicine in today's medical community. Therefore all projects and activities funded by the Foundation must adhere to the standards and guidelines set by current medical scientific research.

The Foundation's aim is to create a bridge between conventional and complementary medicine, to achieve real integration on the basis of science and research. The vision of the Foundation is that physicians of the future will be familiar with both scientific and complementary medicine as well as homeopathy, so that they will be in a position to decide which kind of therapy is the best for each individual patient.

Until the end of 1997 the Foundation has supported more than 150 projects with a total funding of over DM 14 millions.

Currently 40 projects including 9 scholarships for doctorates and 15 student study groups are being supported. The annual budget is DM 3.3 millions.

In this respect the Carstens Foundation is the largest institution for the funding of science and research in the fields of homeopathy and complementary medicine in Europe.

The Foundation raises its funds from the general public via its supporting association 'Natur und Medizin' in Bonn. This entails special obligations for those being supported: to use the funds sparingly, to be willing to describe a project or the results intelligibly to all as well as taking into account the interests of the population.

Support by the Carstens Foundation is based on the willingness of those involved to cooperate closely with the Foundation in planning and conducting a project as well as utilizing the results. Therefore the Foundation offers advice on technical, methodological and biometrical questions. The projects usually are supervised on site. The Foundation organizes expert meetings and symposia and supports the publishing of results. The attendance at the annual meeting of project leaders under the patronage of Veronica Carstens is obligatory.

'Natur und Medizin' – The Supporting Association

Unlike most other foundations and trusts, the Carstens Foundation relies mainly on public support. When it was established, one of the main objectives was to raise funds to increase the Foundation's capital base. Public response was overwhelming with thousands of people sending in donations and letters of support. The founders then clearly recognized the potential of a large support organization and – as a result – 'Natur und Medizin' was established in 1983. Currently, there are more than 50 000 members. This trend clearly indicates that people are willing to accept alternative therapies in addition to or in combination with conventional treatment. Recent surveys show that more than 90% of the German public are in favor of alternative therapies.

This development is largely due to the interminable and enthusiastic efforts of Mrs. Carstens herself. She is constantly on the go, holding speeches, attending meetings, and speaking to the media. Her popularity in Germany is immense. Throughout the years Mrs. Carstens along with her team at 'Natur und Medizin' have established one of the largest grass roots movements in the field of alternative and complementary medicine in Europe.

'Natur und Medizin' has set up an efficient and essential information system for the public. It publishes six newsletters a year containing health tips and other valuable information; it produces and sells brochures on a variety of topics ranging from 'Allergies' to 'Vaccination'. In addition, the 'Natur und Medizin' team answers innumerable letters and telephone calls from members and other patients seeking advice on alternative treatments and questions on health.

Thus the Carstens Foundation has become one of the most respected organizations of its kind throughout the world today.