

## Media Release

### CM Research Indicates Informed Consumer Choice

The Complementary Healthcare Council (CHC) of Australia supports consumers in making informed choices about the Complementary Medicines (CMs) products they purchase, including vitamins, minerals and multivitamins. The majority of consumers not only understand what the product is that they are purchasing but also why they are taking it. Whilst the CHC continues to improve knowledge and understanding around CMs, consumers deserve credit for their informed purchasing decisions.

In response to comments made today by consumerist group Choice around consumer purchases of multivitamins, Executive Director of the CHC, Dr Wendy Morrow, noted that independent research conducted in May 2011 on behalf of the CHC found that 75% of consumers knew exactly what CM product they were buying and why.<sup>1</sup>

“Comments made by Choice today highlight that there are consumer segments considered to benefit from supplementation, including pregnant women and those on restrictive diets. This goes hand in hand with the research conducted in 2011 which found that consumers are making informed choices with regard to the products they are purchasing in order to address their individual health needs.” she highlighted.

“The CM Industry also consistently emphasises to consumers the need to discuss their health and supplementation requirements with a healthcare professional,” Dr Morrow added.

CMs, including vitamins, minerals and multivitamins, are generally regulated in Australia as Listed, low risk medicines, indicated for minor self limiting conditions, maintaining health and wellbeing, or the promotion or enhancement of health. Multivitamins, which can contain anywhere from 12-25 plus ingredients per dose, are designed to protect against broad nutritional deficiencies and therefore would not be confused by consumers with supplements targeted at specific nutritional requirements.

Dr Morrow also noted that labelling of CM products is a matter currently being addressed with consumers in mind. The purpose of a CM product label is to provide information about the product that enables consumers to choose an appropriate medicine on their own and to understand and act on the information appropriately, allowing them to use the medicine safely and effectively.

“The CM Industry is working closely with the industry regulator, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), to ensure that CM product labels continue to provide the appropriate level of information to consumers in a way that is easily digestible,” she went on to say.

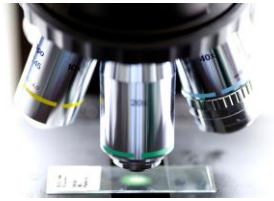
The CHC is not only committed to appropriate regulation but to improving knowledge and understanding around CMs, both within the healthcare and medicines industries as well as amongst consumers.

Suitable for anyone already involved in or with an interest the Industry, or simply looking to improve their knowledge around their personal health and supplementation requirements, the CHC has established a professional development program. Developed by independent industry experts, the CHC's non-product based program provides in-depth and up-to-date training in key areas of the CM Industry.

Together with the professional development courses, the CHC has also launched *Naturally* Australia magazine, as part of a comprehensive community engagement program focused on CMs and consumer health. The winter edition of *Naturally*, designed specifically for consumers, is supported by a consumer specific online portal and Facebook

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<sup>1</sup> My Opinions Research for CHC May 2011



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page. Providing independent and professionally written content addressing general health, wellness, nutrition and lifestyle, consumers can find this magazine on selected news stands Nationwide.

For more information on the CHC professional development program please visit the dedicated [website](#).

To check out *Naturally* Australia online, visit the [website](#) or [Facebook page](#).

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