



Media Release

CHC Clarifies - Complementary Medicines NOT incorporated in Government review of natural therapies insurance rebates

Clarifying one of the measures announced in the latest federal budget, the CHC emphasised that a forthcoming review of natural therapies does not encompass Complementary Medicines (Vitamins, Minerals and Supplements) or Traditional Chinese Medicines (covered by AHPRA), acupuncture and chiropractic. The review will examine efficacy and cost-effectiveness of natural therapies which are currently included in Government funded private health insurance rebates.

The Complementary Medicines Industry is strongly founded in science and clinical trials and has a growing evidence base – both in terms of efficacy and cost-effectiveness analysis. Dr Wendy Morrow, Executive Director of the CHC, noted that further research is welcomed by the Industry, which is progressively being recognised for its scientific approach to product development.

“The CM Industry strongly supports all science and evidence based health treatments and medicines and welcomes further research by the Government; demonstrated by our response to the federal budget announcement yesterday, in which we welcomed the continued investment in health research and innovation through the NHMRC and university funding,” commented Dr Morrow. “We have been driving the science based R&D agenda and it is great to see the Government getting involved” she added.

The CM Industry itself faces barriers to research and innovation, highlighted in the CHC’s Pre-Budget Submission. The lack of IP protection under the current system means that it is not viable for companies to undertake research and development to the extent to which it occurs in the Pharmaceutical Industry. Without this protection, investments made by individual companies can easily be capitalised on by competitors, which is extraordinary in today’s innovation oriented world.

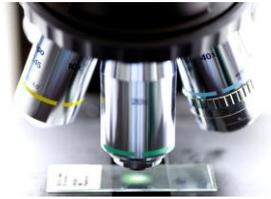
Dr Wendy Morrow highlighted the commitment of industry to research and development, noting the lack of return on investment which is afforded in other industries.

“The CM Industry lacks any form of IP Protection for research and development outcomes. The industry is currently not party to or seeking PBS reimbursements, despite the ~\$200 million raised annually in GST from CM products. Yet it continues to undertake research,” commented Dr Morrow. “The industry is committed to building on the existing scientific evidence base for CMs and welcomes recognition from the Government for the need for further research,” she went on to say.

With regard to the announced review, the CHC welcomes additional research into efficacy and cost-effectiveness but implores the Government to ensure that the review is comprehensive and undertaken in consultation with representatives of the natural therapy practices affected.

For further information on the CHC and our work, visit the [CHC website](http://www.chc.org.au).

Ends



Media Release

CHC Contacts

Executive Director
Communications and Media Relations

Dr Wendy Morrow
Sophie Dimmock

04 0707 2151
02 6260 4022