



Media Release

CHC Courses a great option for Pharmacists' Professional Development in Complementary Medicines

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The Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (CHC) has developed a professional development package to assist pharmacists meet increased consumer demand for expert information on complementary medicines (CM).

"Pharmacists are facing ever increasing demands from consumers for trustworthy generic information on complementary medicine" highlighted Dr Wendy Morrow, Executive Director of the CHC. "Our online programs of study can provide pharmacists the expert knowledge they need while assisting in managing CPD requirements efficiently"

CMs are growing in importance in Pharmacy, as at Sept 2011, Vitamins and Supplements was the largest over the counter (OTC) sales segment (19.1% of OTC sales) and growth was above category average (+9.9%).¹

As an OTC purchase consumers rely heavily on the advice of healthcare professionals when choosing CMs. 37% of consumers rely on Pharmacies for this advice – the single largest reference source within the medical professions.²

However a study conducted by the NPS in 2008³ found that many health professionals, including pharmacists, were not sufficiently confident in the area of complementary medicines to initiate consultation with consumers.

Competition in this retail segment is increasing, coming from supermarkets, discount chemists and on-line, placing great pressure on margins. The demand for areas to differentiate community pharmacies has never been greater. Professional service provision is a key trend in competitive strategy.

In 2011, the CHC, launched the first of an eventual suite of 6 certificate courses which will comprise its Diploma in Complementary Healthcare Products

As the leading expert association exclusively committed to a vital and sustainable complementary healthcare products industry, the CHC developed the courses with an independent expert team, focused on complementary medicines at the customer front line.

The program launched with four certificate courses in 2011.

1. Foundation Studies for Complementary Healthcare Products
2. Certificate in Complementary Healthcare Products – Nutritional Supplements
3. Certificate in Complementary Healthcare Products – Herbal Supplements
4. Certificate in Complementary Healthcare Products – Homoeopathics and Herbal Essences

¹ 2011 Pharmacy State of the industry report - Nielsen

² NPS complementary medicines users report 2008. Downloaded from

http://www.nps.org.au/research_and_evaluation/current_research/complementary_medicines/cms_users_research/complementary_medicines_consumer_research, September 2011.

³ Complementary Medicines: Information Use and Needs of Australian Health Professionals, NPS, 2008. Downloaded from

http://www.nps.org.au/research_and_evaluation/current_research/complementary_medicines/cms_health_professionals_research/complementary_medicines_health_professionals_research, September 2011.

Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia

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The remaining two courses will be launched in 2012. All courses can also be completed separately.

5. Certificate in Complementary Healthcare Products – Therapeutics
6. Certificate in Complementary Healthcare Products – Sales and Advertising

The Australia Pharmacy Board⁴ assessors have determined the CHC certificate courses to be formal courses of postgraduate study and as such are considered to be *Group 2* CPD activities. Participants in a program of study can self record this study as self-directed learning as part of a structured learning plan.

To assist students in the completion of Pharmacy Board registration requirements, the CHC offers course resources to keep the documentation requirements fast and simple.

The CHC is also launching in 2012 the Introductory Certificate in Complementary Healthcare Products which is primarily aimed at staff taking their first steps in the industry, such as pharmacy assistants.

In addition to the course study materials, students have access to the Natural Standard Database for the duration of their study. The Natural Standard Database provides high quality, evidence-based information on complementary medicines for reference.

The courses are easily accessible through on-line delivery and conveniently allow students to set their own learning pace and access the on line tutor. A number of flexible payment options are also available.

As a special reader offer, enrolments received and paid for by the end of March 2012 will receive a 15% discount (Quote code MR1201).

To enroll or find out more see <http://moodle.chc.org.au/> or email us at education@chc.org.au

To find out more about the CHC long on to www.chc.org.au

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⁴ The Pharmacy Board of Australia accepts self-directed Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as part of a structured learning plan. When non-accredited CPD activities are undertaken, it is the responsibility of the individual pharmacist to undertake a review according to the Pharmacy Board Guidelines for self-recording CPD credits.