

Media Release



13 May 2013

CM media reports taking consumers for a ride

Readers of some Fairfax media are being misled through biased articles recently published regarding complementary medicines. These are one-sided and sadly fail to recognise consumer benefits, according to the industry body, The Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (CHC).

“They fail to offer any insight into existing proactive measures and future developments that could increase the volume of research to support complementary medicines, and related therapies, as is supported by the Australian industry”, said Dr Wendy Morrow, CHC Executive Director.

“Research into pharmaceutical drugs, which is carried out by the large pharmaceutical companies in return for 15+ year’s patent protection, is not afforded to the CM industry. However, the articles fail to acknowledge the significant body of independent complementary medicines research that does exist by mainstream research bodies which is published in the public domain.

We need a supportive government-led research policy that encourages more CM industry research to increase the source pool of evidence for all, development of measures to protect the IP of CM-related companies who spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on research every year, and increased resourcing of the TGA to help them improve regulation of the CM industry”, said Dr Morrow.

“Fairfax failed to highlight that the 2011 ANAO Report (No.3 2011-12) stated that there is no statistically valid, general conclusion that can be drawn about the state of compliance. Nor that there was a myriad of reasons for non-compliance, such as missing full stops and that approx. 97% of these cases were almost immediately rectified.

Advertising compliance of CMs is working and all press, broadcast and digital CM-related adverts in Australia are required to be pre-approved according to the TGA Advertising Code 2007. Consumers are well versed in deciding what products and services to buy, and clearly they return because these products meet their demand”, said Dr Morrow.

“Such criticism suggests consumers are uneducated, which is not true. There is more information and evidence now for anyone to access, and consumers are more educated today than ever. Consumers are taking control of their health and well-being”, stated Dr Morrow.

On the issue of complementary and alternative therapies, again more research is the best solution. It is hard to believe that Fairfax fail to recognise the benefits of dozens of Universities, medical doctors and others who research, teach and practice CMs, and related therapies in their day to day work.

The Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (CHC)

The CHC is the peak Australian industry body committed to a thriving and sustainable complementary medicines and healthcare products industry. We believe in a holistic healthcare model based on the prevention of illness, long-term community wellness and consumer choice.

We are 100% for the complementary medicines and healthcare products industry, as distinct from the pharmaceutical and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines sector.

Our Board and membership represent complementary healthcare industry stakeholders such as importers, exporters, manufacturers, raw material suppliers, wholesalers, sponsors, distributors, health-food retailers, health practitioners,

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consultants, consumers and marketers. Collectively, our members engage with and are driven by Australian consumer choices every day.

Complementary medicines and natural healthcare products cover products such as vitamins, mineral and nutritional supplements, special purpose foods, natural cosmetics, herbal and homoeopathic medicines, and aromatherapy products.

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