

Media Release

5 December 2013

CHC welcomes WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023

The Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (CHC) has welcomed the publication of the *WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023*, with CEO, Mr Carl Gibson, heartened to see that the strategy stresses the importance of traditional medicines to the totality of health care.

As the peak industry body in Australia for traditional medicines – known as complementary medicines in Australia – the CHC represents an industry that is devoted to improving the health of the Australian community through the promotion of sustainable health and wellbeing.

“Complementary medicines are an often underestimated part of the health care system that contribute strongly to wellbeing and to ensuring that all people have access to care, and the World Health Organisation Strategy emphasises this,” said Mr Gibson.

The *WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023* is intended to support countries to harness the potential contribution that complementary medicines can make to health, wellness and people-centred health care and to the promotion of safe and effective use of complementary medicines through appropriate integration into health systems. The strategy is designed to help health care leaders to develop solutions that contribute to a broader vision of improved health and patient autonomy.

“It is pleasing to read of a growing global recognition, not just by the WHO but also by many countries, for the need to develop a cohesive and integrative approach to health care that allows governments, health care practitioners and, most importantly, consumers, to access complementary medicines in an effective, safe and respectful manner” said Mr Gibson.

“As highlighted in the WHO strategy, the use of complementary medicines has a long history of use in health maintenance and in disease prevention and treatment, particular for chronic disease. In Australia, our vibrant complementary medicines industry has much to offer in terms of contribution to the preventative health agenda.”

“I urge the Australian Government to see the *WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023* as the impetus for fostering the appropriate proactive policies and for recognising complementary medicines as a vital part of a comprehensive Australian health care system,” said Mr Gibson.

ENDS

For Media Interviews or Further Information Contact:

Media and Communications Associate:	Casuarina Forsyth	+61 2 6260 4022
CHC, Chief Executive:	Carl Gibson	+61 432 201 945