

Media Release

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Australia needs a new approach to healthcare

In the lead up to the May announcement of the 2015-16 Federal Budget, Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) has highlighted the need for Australia to have a new approach to healthcare, one which promotes self-reliance and shifts the emphasis of the health system towards greater support of wellness and prevention of disease.

“At a time when our population is ageing, health costs are increasing and the tax base is shrinking, Australia needs to work towards a health model where individuals are supported to accept greater responsibility for their own health,” said Mr Carl Gibson, chief executive officer of CMA.

“The responsible use of complementary medicines, underpinned by appropriate regulations, is a vital element of that self-reliance, which is why the government needs to reflect the economic and population health contributions made by complementary medicines. The use and further development of complementary medicines provides an opportunity to counteract spiralling health care costs through more effective disease prevention and preventable chronic disease management, and potentially less reliance on the hospital system and the PBS.”

“Current health policy in Australia is still focused on the treatment of people after they become unwell. Rather than implementing a health system that will only care for those that can afford to pay, the focus needs to be on a fairer long-term solution, such as assisting all Australians to remain healthy.”

Mr Gibson went on to say, “cooperation and collaboration between policy makers, industry, health professionals and researchers is vital to ensuring that complementary medicines fulfil their potential of contributing to the overall health of all Australians.”

To fully recognise the value that complementary medicines can contribute to both the Australian economy and to public health, CMA is advocating for three key Budget priorities:

1. an appropriate regulatory environment that is commensurate with the low level of risk complementary medicines represent;
2. improving Australia’s health through a focus on preventative healthcare; and
3. encouraging and supporting innovation and investment in research.

[CMA’s pre-Budget submission can be found here.](#)

ENDS

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