

Media Release

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Treasury needs to consider long-term solutions, not short-term savings

In its pre-Budget submission, Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) has recommended the Government reflects the economic and population health contributions made by the complementary medicines industry when considering the upcoming Federal Budget.

“In a supportive environment, the complementary medicines industry is one industry that has the ability to grow exponentially, to support local innovation-rich manufacturing, research and development, and to provide a significant contribution to Australian jobs and exports,” said Mr Carl Gibson, chief executive officer of CMA.

The complementary medicines industry also holds enormous potential to contribute to a sustainable health care system, one that focuses on prevention of chronic disease. With an ageing and increasingly overweight population, Australian society is challenged by conditions such as coronary heart disease, diabetes and stroke, diseases that are largely preventable.¹ In 2013, over \$140 billion was spent on health care services, which is nearly 9.1% of Australia’s total gross domestic product.²

“Surely, figures such as these not only ring Treasury alarm bells, but also highlight the urgent need for a new approach to health policy and practice. Simply reducing health funding will not prevent people from becoming unwell,” said Mr Carl Gibson.

“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.”

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.](#)

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¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2014. Cardiovascular disease, diabetes and chronic kidney disease— Australian facts: Prevalence and incidence. Cardiovascular, diabetes and chronic kidney disease series no. 2.Cat. no. CDK 2. Canberra: AIHW

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014.

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