

Media Release

6 February 2017

Consumers can be confident in herbal products purchased in Australia

Responding to a narrative review recently published in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) advised that Australian consumers can be confident in herbal products purchased in Australia.

Mr Carl Gibson, ceo of CMA said: “Australia has some of the most stringent regulations in the world for herbal products, as for all complementary medicines on the Australian market. Products are required to be entered onto the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) which is maintained by the regulator, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Unless entered on the ARTG, these products cannot be legally imported, exported, manufactured, or supplied to consumers in Australia.”

“Products that are medicinal in nature but not listed on the ARTG may not have been made under GMP principles, and may not meet the quality and safety standards expected by Australian consumers. Concerns raised by the authors, such as adulteration with pharmaceutical agents, inadequate processing and the presence of toxic substances, have been known to affect products purchased online from overseas, which are not subject to the same regulations as those enforced in Australia.”

“Online purchases of complementary medicines should only be made on the recommendation of a qualified healthcare professional or from a known and reputable source,” said Mr Gibson.

The strict Australian regulatory environment mandates that the following occur in the manufacture of complementary medicines available on the Australian market:

- Only utilise ingredients assessed as safe and allowed at safe levels by the TGA.
- The TGA mandates verification testing of all raw materials before a product is manufactured, which provides assurance to Australian consumers that they receive what's stated on the label.
- Batch testing of finished products (tablets /capsules) verifies consistency and quality of the active ingredients within the label claim.
- Stability studies ensure that the product remains potent and safe throughout its shelf life.
- Product quality reviews ensure that quality data is aggregated and tracked over time, allowing the industry to identify and act on any emerging trends.
- Adverse events are rigorously captured and monitored by the TGA so that any emerging issues can be identified and addressed promptly.

ENDS

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