CMA Media Release

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Australia leads the way in regulatory standards for complementary medicines

Mr Carl Gibson, ceo of Complementary Medicines Australia (CMA) has today highlighted that our nation leads the way in regulatory standards for complementary medicines, in response to media articles criticising the regulation of these products in Australia.

“Whilst criticism can be healthy, increasingly our industry has become the target of irresponsible and ill-informed commentary that appears to stem from a misunderstanding of the existing stringent regulatory standards that apply to complementary medicines in Australia and the recent regulatory changes that have strengthened regulatory controls even further.”

“The fact remains that Australian complementary medicines industry operates within one of the most tightly regulated systems in the world, where products are manufactured to a pharmaceutical standard under Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), and strict safety and quality regulations are enforced by the Department of Health’s Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).”

“This regulatory approach demands that manufacturers are licensed and inspected and follow the highest standard of GMP, not only for products for the Australian market but also for those exported overseas.”

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

- Only using ingredients assessed as safe and allowed at safe levels by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (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.
- Product labels provide consumers with information that supports them in making informed choices in selecting these products.
- Ensure that advertising and promotional material is accurate and truthful.
- 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.
- Potential adverse events are identified, monitored and analysed by the TGA so that any emerging issues can be identified and addressed promptly.

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“It comes as no surprise that manufacturers of complementary medicines in Australia have a well deserved global reputation for excellence. The strict regulatory environment ensures that consumers have access to responsible, evidence-based and high quality products, and the ability to make informed choices about including them within their health care options.”

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