



Media Release

CHC Emphasises Regulatory Vigour of CM Industry

The Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (CHC) has today strongly emphasised the regulatory vigour of the complementary medicines industry in Australia - recognised as having one of the highest regarded and most tightly regulated systems in the world. The CHC, the not-for-profit national peak body representing the industry as well as the 75% of consumers who use complementary medicines, works closely with the regulator, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), on enhancing the regulatory framework and compliance arrangements to ensure consumers continue to have access to the high quality, safe products they are demanding.

In response to comments made today by the Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF) around consumer knowledge of complementary medicines and the associated regulatory system, Executive Director of the CHC, Dr Wendy Morrow, pointed out that all complementary medicine products are subject to stringent regulations relative to their risk profile.

“The CHC believes that all medicines on the Australian market, including complementary medicines, should be of high quality, safe and readily available to consumers. All ingredients in a complementary medicines product approved for listing on the TGA’s Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) must be included on a pre-approved list held by the TGA. In addition, all products must be manufactured by license holders in TGA approved facilities under strict Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), she highlighted.

The complementary medicine industry is growing due to consumers increasingly taking a pro-active approach towards their health. Right now in Australia around 14 million consumers take a complementary medicine to complement various aspects of their lives; taking responsibility for their health. With this increasing recognition and awareness of complementary medicines, there also comes more readily available information for consumers and as such, knowledge and understanding is also on the rise. In fact, research¹ shows that the majority of consumers know exactly what complementary medicine product they are buying and why. This goes to show that consumers deserve credit for their informed purchasing decisions.” Dr Morrow added.

Complementary medicines, including vitamins, minerals and multivitamins, are low risk medicines, indicated for minor self limiting conditions, maintaining health and wellbeing, or the promotion or enhancement of health, and as such can be highly beneficial for a range of health conditions and deficiencies.

“Although the CHF ‘Know Your Product’ campaign may be well intended, their approach is unjustly generating fear amongst consumers whom do or would benefit from complementary medicines. The complementary medicines industry is highly regulated on a risk basis, the claims being made by the CHF are therefore misrepresentative, Dr Morrow suggested.

Industry participants also consistently emphasise to consumers the need to discuss their health and supplementation requirements with a healthcare professional, also strongly supporting further education of consumers and other industry participants around complementary medicine products” Dr Morrow added.

To this end, the CHC offers independent professional and knowledge development program. The online, self-paced certificate based program is suitable for anyone already involved in or with an interest the Industry, or simply looking to improve their knowledge around their personal health and supplementation requirements. Developed by independent industry experts, the CHC’s non-product based program provides in-depth and up-to date training in key areas of the CM Industry.

¹ My Opinions Research for CHC May 2011



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Together with the professional development courses, the CHC has also launched *Naturally* Australia magazine, as part of a comprehensive community engagement program focused on CMs and consumer health. The winter edition of *Naturally*, designed specifically for consumers, is supported by a consumer specific online portal and Facebook page. Providing independent and professionally written content addressing general health, wellness, nutrition and lifestyle, consumers can find this magazine on selected news stands Nationwide.

For more information on the CHC professional development program please visit the dedicated [website](#).

To check out *Naturally* Australia online, visit the [website](#) or [Facebook page](#).

To hear further discussion with Dr Morrow around this issue, tune in to Channel Ten's The Project, airing tonight at 6pm.

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