



Media Release

CHC Supports Consumer Demand for Education in Complementary Medicine

The Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (CHC) supports Australian Universities in providing courses in Complementary Medicines (CMs) and Therapies and sees a valid role for this field in the healthcare of Australians.

Reports in the media on 27 January 2012 have brought attention to a new lobby group naming themselves, 'Friends of Science of Medicine', formed for the purpose of pressuring Australian Universities to cut popular courses in Complementary and Alternative Therapies. However, with 1 in 3 Universities in Australia offering such courses, as well as many housing and supporting Complementary Medicine Research Centres, there is a clear demand for education and research in an area that is growing in popularity amongst consumers and the scientific research community.

Preventive healthcare, the area of health policy to which CMs belong, is also a key focus of Government Health Policy, illustrated by the establishment of the Australian National Preventive Health Agency (ANPHA) in early 2011. This recognition is also seen globally, with reports in the media also on January 27 of the move by the British Government to remind all GPs that they should be advising patients falling within at-risk groups to take vitamin D supplements. *"There is unquestionably a legitimate place for Complementary Medicine in Education and Health Policy, something which is clearly recognised by both Higher Education institutes and Governments across the world,"* commented Dr Wendy Morrow, Executive Director of the CHC.

"It is also important to note that this new lobby group represents the minority of medical opinion in Australia in relation to CMs. Many doctors work within the realm of both Orthodox and Complementary Medicine, recognising and supporting the consumer driven move towards the increased use of Complementary Medicines," Dr Morrow went on to say. A survey conducted by the National Prescribing Service (NPS) in 2008 found that 90% of GPs had recommended CMs to their patients, further going to show the minority opinion of this newly formed lobby group.

Research conducted more recently by Independent Research Organisation, UMR Research, into consumer opinions around CMs has highlighted that around half the adult population now purchase a CM product at least every quarter and the majority (75%) are able to name the exact CM product they buy and why. This research illustrates that consumers do make informed choices about their right to choose appropriate healthcare for their needs.

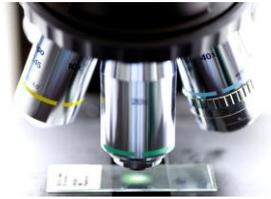
CMs are founded on evidence of traditional use, often measured and accumulated over thousands of years, which is an accepted form of proof of safety and quality by the Australian Government when approving these medicines. As stated in the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 all indications and claims made about these products must be supported by appropriate evidence.

However, in an increasingly technological and scientifically driven environment, the Industry recognises the need for further science based evidence and as such has been vocally supportive of adding to the existing body of scientific evidence around CMs; this area forming one of the key recommendations of the CHC Federal Budget Submission for

Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia

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2012-13, which will be made on behalf of the entire CM Industry. *“This is a key challenge for the Industry but one which we hope to receive support to move forward on from the Federal Government,”* commented Dr Morrow. *“The CM Industry has a legitimate place in both Government Health Policy and Higher Education and we will continue to ensure that this is the case,”* concluded Dr Morrow.

For more information about the CHC and our work, please visit our website or contact us directly:
<http://www.chc.org.au/>

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