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11 May 2010

MEDIA STATEMENT

Primary health care reforms a good start but more needed

The Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI), the industry body representing non-prescription consumer healthcare products today welcomed initiatives in the Federal Budget aimed at strengthening primary health care, but called for measures to hasten consumer self care.

“The funding for additional nurses in general practice will assist in areas such as preventative health and chronic disease,” said the Executive Director of ASMI, Juliet Seifert.

“The extension of practice nurses is a step in the right direction and will assist consumers through improved access to health care. It represents an important step in obtaining the best use from our highly trained health workforce.

“Practice nurses can play a valuable role in addressing minor ailments and chronic conditions, and taking pressure off already over-burdened GPs.

“This should be supported by a public education campaign to help consumers and health professionals understand what consumers require and when it is appropriate to seek the advice of a GP or an allied health professional such as a pharmacist,” Ms Seifert said.

Measures to encourage electronic health are welcome and have the capacity to streamline primary care and improve health outcomes. The capacity to monitor and track medicines prescribed and recommended to consumers through electronic recording can play a valuable role in Australia’s Quality Use of Medicines policy.

About ASMI: The Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI) is the peak industry body for the Australian self care industry representing consumer healthcare products including over-the-counter medicines and complementary medicines. ASMI’s mission is to promote better health through responsible self-care. This means ensuring that safe and effective self-care products are readily available to all Australians at a reasonable cost. ASMI works to encourage responsible use by consumers and an increasing role for cost-effective self-medication products as part of the broad national health strategy. www.asmi.com.au

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