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18 February 2010

MEDIA RELEASE

End of an era as Juliet Seifert plans to step down as Executive Director of ASMI

The President of the Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI), Mr Ralf Dahmen today extended his gratitude to longstanding ASMI Executive Director, Ms Juliet Seifert who has advised that she will be retiring from the position in August.

“Juliet has been at the helm of ASMI and its predecessor for almost 21 years and is one of the most highly respected figures in the healthcare industry,” Mr Dahmen said.

“I would like to express my sincere thanks to Juliet for her outstanding contribution to the industry over many years. She will be greatly missed by her colleagues and members of ASMI,” he said.

Ms Seifert has decided to stand down as Executive Director for personal reasons and will spend a period of time away from the industry with her immediate family. She joined the Proprietary Association of Australia - the forerunner to ASMI - in 1989.

“Juliet’s leadership qualities and her vision for the industry have transformed the way that we do business and helped establish the over-the-counter medicines industry as a key player in the healthcare sector,” Mr Dahmen said.

“I know that I speak for her many colleagues and friends in wishing her all the very best for the future.”

Ms Seifert said: “I am proud of our record of achievement in building ASMI into a credible and influential force in the consumer healthcare products sector.

“I believe we have established a strong industry voice with links to a wide range of professional and consumer organisations as well as key government policy making committees, while significantly expanding the range and breadth of services to members.

“I would like to thank ASMI members, industry colleagues and my team at the ASMI secretariat for the dedication and support that has made this possible,” Ms Seifert said.

The new Executive Director will be Dr Deon Schoombie, currently designated Deputy Executive Director of ASMI. He has been Scientific Director of ASMI since mid 2004.

Dr Schoombie is a general medical practitioner with a long history of experience in the pharmaceutical industry including in public policy, advertising, marketing and regulatory issues. He has also worked in international medical publishing and hospital management and has undertaken post graduate training in traditional Chinese medicine.

“I am honoured to be taking on this role and excited at the prospect of being able to represent ASMI members at a time of significant change in the health sector,” Dr Schoombie said.

“We face a number of opportunities in ensuring that Australians have appropriate access to safe, effective and affordable non-prescription medicines.

“There is significant scope for broader adoption of policies to encourage consumer self care, particularly in relation to minor ailments, chronic conditions and preventative health.

“Better access to medicines also entails the appropriate down scheduling of prescription medicines to non-prescription status, while enabling consumers to better utilize the services of pharmacists as a first point of call for some minor ailments,” he said.

Dr Schoombie will take up the post of Executive Director when Ms Seifert formally steps down in August.

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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