

MEDIA STATEMENT

Reaction to Federal Opposition Health Policy

The Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI), the industry body representing non-prescription consumer healthcare products today welcomed the focus on preventative health contained in the Federal Opposition's health policy announced today.

The Executive Director of the ASMI, Juliet Seifert, said health budgets and medical resources would be stretched to unsustainable levels unless Australians were enabled and encouraged to take greater personal responsibility for good health.

“A self care, or preventative focus, has considerable capacity to change individual behaviour and help to achieve a more balanced health budget, while targeting the highest priority health issues,” Ms Seifert said.

“Increasingly we have to face up to the fact that good health is largely about personal responsibility.

“With costs of health rising significantly, there is much more that can be done by individuals to avoid illness and enjoy good health and longevity.

“A self-care approach involves a fundamental shift from cure to prevention as part of a focus on holistic health. This includes promotion of a healthy lifestyle including good diet and exercise, as well as use of self-medication to treat minor ailments or some chronic conditions.

“The increased use of over-the-counter and complementary medicines shows that many Australian are already knowledgeable and willing to treat everyday ailments rather than going to the doctor for minor self-limiting conditions,” Ms Seifert said.

ASMI has consistently argued that self-care should become an integral part of a comprehensive national health plan for Australia. Self-care has already become a central element of the UK and Canadian health systems.

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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