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## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **New Health ministry appointments bring stability and fresh talent**

The Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI), the industry body representing non-prescription consumer healthcare products today welcomed the changes announced in the health portfolio under Prime Minister Julia Gillard's new ministerial arrangements.

The Executive Director of ASMI, Dr Deon Schoombie said the organisation was delighted to see Minister Nicola Roxon remain at the helm of the health portfolio.

"Minister Roxon has shown a capacity to tackle some of the toughest issues facing health. The stability and leadership that she will provide at this time will be extremely valuable as we move ahead on the health reform agenda.

Dr Schoombie also welcomed the new ministerial role for Mark Butler, who becomes Minister for Mental Health and Ageing.

"We have established a very good working relationship with Mr Butler in his role of overseeing the work of the Therapeutic Goods Administration, and I congratulate him on his promotion to the ministry."

ASMI said the appointment of the Member for Ballarat, Catherine King to the position of Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing was an excellent decision.

"I would like to welcome Catherine to the portfolio. Catherine brings a professional background and a demonstrated commitment to working with people that will be a great asset in this portfolio. We look forward to working with Catherine on the range of issues that impact the consumer healthcare sector," Dr Schoombie said.

Issues central to ASMI include preventative health, the increased role in primary health care for pharmacists, the scope for GPs in helping to educate consumers on self care, and the regulatory framework affecting consumer healthcare products.

ASMI strongly believes that there is scope for Government to take a greater role in helping to advance the concept of patient self care – empowering consumers to take greater responsibility and control over personal health.

Through a partnership with government, GPs, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals, ASMI believes consumers can be encouraged to better look after their health, thus improving health outcomes and taking pressure off scarce health resources and health budgets.

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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](http://www.asmi.com.au)

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