



Australian Self-Medication Industry Inc
Suite 2203, Level 22, 141 Walker Street,
North Sydney NSW 2060
PO Box 764, North Sydney NSW 2059
Ph +61 2 9922 5111 Fax +61 2 9959 3693
Email: info@asmi.com.au www.asmi.com.au
ABN 55 082 798 952

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MEDIA STATEMENT

ASMI welcomes new minister in the health portfolio

The Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI), the industry body representing non-prescription consumer healthcare products, today welcomed the announcement by the Prime Minister of Ms Tanya Plibersek as the new Minister for Health and Ageing.

The Executive Director of ASMI, Dr Deon Schoombie, said the organisation is delighted that the health portfolio will continue under the responsibility of a dedicated and effective minister.

"I would like to congratulate Ms Plibersek on her elevation to cabinet and to the health portfolio. We greatly look forward to working closely with her, and are encouraged by the passion and hard work she has shown in her role as Minister for Human Services and Minister for Social Inclusion.

"ASMI would also like to congratulate the new Minister for Innovation and Industry, Greg Combet.

ASMI recently brought the strategic objectives of the over-the-counter (OTC) medicines sector before the government's Pharmaceutical Industry Working Group, and looks forward to continuing to work with the health and industry ministers who jointly oversee this body, and the wider group in addressing key issues affecting the non-prescription healthcare sector.

"I would like to extend my appreciation and congratulations to the outgoing Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon, who has been, not only an outstanding minister but, a very accessible and engaging minister to work with on matters impacting the industry.

"Along with the Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mark Butler, who is now in cabinet, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing, Catherine King, ASMI is pleased that the portfolio will be represented by senior personnel with a strong record of achievement across the government."

Issues that are central to ASMI and which will be pursued with the new minister include measures to provide IP protection for OTC medicines, harmonisation of medicines scheduling and advertising with New Zealand, and the expansion of consumer self care and improved health literacy through coordinated effort between government and key stakeholders.

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

Media contact: Bob Bowden, Foresight Communications (02) 9241 2811, 0412 753 298