



MEDIA RELEASE

AACMA RESPONSE TO SEGMENT IN 'THE EPOCH TIMES'

Lack of Government Regulation in Traditional Medicine 'Alarming'? (7 March 2010)

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/content/view/30937/>

NATIONAL REGISTRATION FOR TCM PRACTITIONERS

In your article "Lack of Government Regulation in Traditional Medicine 'Alarming'" you refer to comments made by Dr Kerryn Phelps that the absence of national registration standards for TCM practitioners in Australia and is "putting consumers at risk".

This may mislead your readers to believe there are no standards being maintained for TCM or that there is currently no government action for registration to occur.

The Chinese medicine profession has been approved for inclusion in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for the Health Professions from 1 July 2012.

You further report that, the lack of standards for prescribing alternative medicines is 'alarming'. This is sensationalist and fuels the general public with misinformation that could cause them to be unnecessarily concerned about their health care choices.

As the peak body representing TCM practitioners, including Chinese Herbalists and Acupuncturists, the AACMA (Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medical Association Ltd) welcomes the transition.

AACMA CEO, Judy James, say that "the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association Ltd, (AACMA) has consistently set the national benchmarks for acupuncture and Chinese medicine education and practice in Australia for over 30 years".

Manufactured Chinese herbal medicine products imported into or sold in Australia are regulated by the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration. This regulation requires evidence of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) as well as other safety standards that must be met before these products can be made available. Consumers should always look for the Therapeutic Goods Administration "AUST L" or "AUST R" number printed on the front of complementary medicine packaging.

Individual Chinese herbal medicines, although not as highly regulated as manufactured products in Australia, are covered by various regulations including food, customs and quarantine standards.

Herbs purchased over the internet from overseas sources may not have passed the same controls required in Australia and may include fake, adulterated or illegal substances.

AACMA reassures the many people who are receiving Chinese herbal medicine treatments in Australia that it is safe and effective when prescribed and dispensed by a qualified Chinese medicine practitioner.

AACMA cautions against self-medication of herbal remedies and recommends that the public seek the professional advice of a qualified Chinese herbal medicine practitioner before consuming any product claiming to be Chinese herbal medicine.

Members of the public can locate a qualified AACMA accredited Chinese medicine herbalist by contacting the AACMA National Practitioner Referral Service (1300 725 334) or via the Find a Practitioner service at www.acupuncture.org.au.

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