

## NATURAL HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

### **Complementary Healthcare Council (CHC)** [www.chc.org.au](http://www.chc.org.au)

Represents all business involved in the natural health industry to government and media.

The CHC is the leading expert industry association representing businesses involved in all facets of the complementary healthcare industry. It is unique in representing all stakeholder groups in the complementary healthcare industry. Members include importers, exporters, manufacturers, raw material suppliers, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, practitioners, consultants, direct marketers, multi level marketers and consumers. It is the principal reference point for members, the government, the media and consumers to communicate about all issues relating to the complementary healthcare industry.

The CHC has invested on behalf of the Complementary Medicine Industry to provide access to the Natural Standard database for its financial members. 'Natural Standard' was founded by healthcare providers and researchers to provide high-quality, evidence-based information about complementary and alternative therapies and products. Grades reflect the level of available scientific data for or against the use of each therapy or product for a specific medical condition.

Natural Standard provides evidence-based, peer-reviewed, consensus-driven, decision-support tools for sponsors, manufacturers, suppliers, retailers, practitioners and consumers.

### **Extract from [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au) : Dept of Health & Aging**

#### Submission by CHC to NICNAS October 2012.

"The Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (the CHC) is appreciative of the opportunity to provide this submission on the Review to the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS), dated June 2012.

Complementary medicines and natural healthcare products are vitamins, mineral and nutritional supplements, special purpose foods, herbal and homeopathic medicines, aromatherapy products, and natural cosmetics using herbals and botanicals. Roy Morgan Research indicates that **almost 75 per cent of Australians use complementary medicines**. Recent research showed that up to 2 billion dollars is being spent by consumers on complementary medicines and healthcare annually. With figures like these, it is clear that **complementary medicines play a significant role in the health care choices of contemporary Australians**.

There are over 300 complementary medicine companies in Australia generating around \$2 billion in annual revenues. Australian companies export around \$200 million in complementary medicines to more than 20 countries in Southeast Asia, Europe and The America's, and this continues to grow at higher rates than domestic consumption. In Australia the industry generates around 5,000 highly-skilled manufacturing jobs, and indirectly supports a further 60,000 jobs. The global market has been estimated at \$US 83 billion annually. The production of complementary medicines in Australia is a substantial industry, with approximately 59 TGA approved manufacturing facilities for listed medicines nationally (including CAM's, sunscreens and over-the-counter medicines). **Australia's medicines industry continues to lead the world in the development of global benchmark standards in safety, quality and efficacy.**

The contribution made by complementary medicines to **improving population health outcomes is supported by a large and constantly growing evidence base**. This is particularly the case for major products such as multi vitamins, vitamin B, and fish oil, which together account for approximately 50 percent of complementary medicine sales in Australia. There are approximately 10,000 such medicines available on the Australian market. The evidence suggests that selected complementary medicine interventions are more cost-effective in dealing with minor conditions than the available pharmaceutical medicines on the market (for some the cost differential is up to 70 per cent), and their efficacy has been recognized by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).” *End of excerpt.*

**Australasian Integrative Medicine Association** [www.aima.net.au](http://www.aima.net.au) (**AIMA**), **Integrating complementary and mainstream medicine**. **See website** for the aims, philosophy and core values of this organisation. The purpose is to bring respect and to integrate both allopathic and naturopathic bodies of knowledge in health care.

*AIMA Mission Statement: To act as the peak medical body promoting the practice of evidence-based integrative medicine, research and education as the gold standard for optimizing wellbeing, prevention and management of disease in Australasian health care systems.*

The Australasian Integrative Medicine Association (AIMA) is an independent not for profit organization of individual medical practitioners seeking to provide whole person medical care by integrating evidence-based complementary medicine into mainstream practice. AIMA is supported by its membership and governed by a Board of voluntary doctors and academic leaders in the field of integrative medicine.

Since its inception in 1992, AIMA has grown to be the leading voice for integrative practitioners. AIMA membership and successful events, including the International Holistic Health Conference, have helped promote the growing body of research and provide education about complementary medicines and therapies.

AIMA has forged relationships with key organisations such as the RACGP – through the AIMA/RACGP Joint Working Party, TGA and AMA as well as other professional bodies with an interest in integrative therapies. Currently AIMA has a special Joint Working Party with the RACGP (Royal Australian College of General Practitioners). AIMA works collaboratively with other associations such as **the Australian College of Nutritional and Environmental Medicine (ACNEM)** in a spirit of mutual support.

AIMA has prepared Position Statements on areas of complementary medicine such as Long Consultations by medical practitioners. AIMA seeks to ensure both practitioners and consumers have access to the best available knowledge about the benefits and risks of these modalities so that optimal patient care and good health can be achieved and maintained.

Professor Ian Brighthope and the Australian College of Nutritional and Environmental Medicine (ACNEM) which offers post graduate courses for the medical profession have played an important role in placing nutritional medicine at the forefront of health solutions. **See websites** [www.nutritioncare.com.au/aboutus/history](http://www.nutritioncare.com.au/aboutus/history) and [www.acnem.org](http://www.acnem.org)