



Review of Mutual Recognition Schemes
Productivity Commission
LB2 Collins Street East
MELBOURNE VIC 8003

To whom it may concern

**CHC Submission re: Review of Mutual Recognition Schemes – Productivity
Commission Draft Research Report**

Thank you for the opportunity for the Complementary Healthcare Council (CHC) to make a submission to the above review.

The CHC is the leading expert association exclusively committed to a vital and sustainable complementary healthcare products industry. We are unique in representing all stakeholder groups in the industry. Our members, both Australian and New Zealand businesses, include importers, exporters, direct and multi-level marketers, manufacturers, raw material suppliers, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, practitioners, consultants and consumers.

The CHC has a specific interest in the Trans-Tasman Harmonisation of therapeutic goods regulations and the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement (TTMRA) in relation to food type 'dietary supplements'.

Draft Recommendation 7.2

The CHC notes the conclusion drawn by the Productivity Commission in regards to therapeutic goods and in principle supports draft recommendation 7.2 - ***“The special exemption for therapeutic goods should continue until a joint regulatory regime can be achieved. The Australian and New Zealand Governments should resume negotiations to establish a joint regulatory scheme for therapeutic products, and a joint agency to oversee the scheme, as soon as feasible after the 2008 New Zealand national election”.***

The CHC considers industry is continuing to bear the cost of meeting two different regulatory systems and supports the reinstatement of a joint regulatory scheme between Australia and New Zealand. However, the CHC strongly suggests that this occur within an appropriate time period for the best interest of the complementary medicines industry.

Australia only environment

The CHC was heavily involved in the establishment and development of the joint therapeutic scheme (Australia New Zealand Therapeutic Products Authority (ANZTPA)) between Australia and New Zealand. The lack of support by the New Zealand parliament was disappointing given the extensive work carried out by both industry and the regulatory bodies.

During the consultation period under Trans-Tasman harmonisation, the introduction in Australia of a number of policy and legislative changes to improve the current therapeutic

goods regulatory system was delayed as they were to be addressed under the new regulatory scheme – the CHC considers there is now an urgency to address these issues. The CHC considers it essential this work be progressed in an Australia only environment if a supported commitment cannot be made by the New Zealand government.

The CHC notes regulatory authorities in Australia are initiating reform in an Australia only environment; the CHC supports this movement and encourages more consultation with industry.

CHC Recommendation

The CHC, in principle, supports draft recommendation 7.2 outlined in the Productivity Commissions Draft Research Report however suggests there be some urgency in its progression. The CHC considers harmonisation between the two countries important for the complementary medicines and food industries and requests this issue be given high priority.

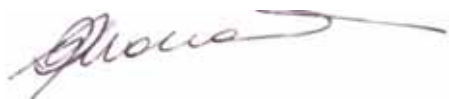
If the joint regulatory agency is agreed to by both governments, an appropriate deadline for implementation must be established. The CHC suggests that if the deadline is not met by either party, the concept of the joint regulatory scheme be abandoned and plans for therapeutic goods to fall under permanent exemption be initiated.

The CHC has been encouraged by recent progression within Australia on regulatory reform, particularly relating to complementary medicines, and hopes progression of this nature continues.

The CHC would welcome the opportunity to discuss any matters relating to this submission. If you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to further information on the outcomes of this consultation process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Wendy Morrow', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr Wendy Morrow
Executive Director

11 December 2008