

PHAA Cairns Conference Workshop Title: Complementary medicines and advertising reform: Policy challenges, successes and failures. Sep 26, 2018, 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM.

Chair: Ken Harvey, School of Public Health, Monash University

Presenters:

- John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary for Health Products Regulation, Department of Health
- Jon Wardle, Head, Regulatory, Legislative and Policy Stream, Australian Research Centre in Complementary and Integrative Medicine, University Technology Sydney
- Alanna Rottler, School of Public Health, Monash University
- Mal Vickers, School of Public Health, Monash University.

Workshop abstract:

There are currently over 11,500 complementary medicines listed on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods. These medicines are used by around one third of all Australians. Sales reached \$4.7 billion in 2016.

However, post-marketing reviews by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in 2015-6 and 2016-17 revealed that 80% of around 400 products investigated had compliance problems, mainly because they lacked evidence to support the claims made.

In 2016, the Government supported most of the recommendations made by the Review of Medicines and Medical Devices Regulation designed to improve compliance and strengthen consumer protection. Subsequently, the TGA held many consultations on how to implement the Review's broad-brush recommendations.

Earlier this year, after considerable controversy, the Therapeutic Goods Amendment (2017 Measures No. 1) was passed after the Government accepted one of several amendments put to the Senate.

The implementation of the Bill continued to be contested by stakeholders, especially with respect to a list of permitted indications, a new Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code, the food-medicine interface, a new complaint system, education of consumers, increased post-marketing surveillance and more stringent and timely penalties for regulatory violations. The new measures commenced operation on 1 July 2018.

This saga provides a nice case study of contested policy; the challenges faced, success and failure.

Participants in this workshop will identify the stakeholders involved and their competing agendas; analyse strategies used to influence policy and evaluate why some policy objectives succeeded while others failed.