

MEDIA STATEMENT

Pseudoephedrine ban not the answer to illicit drug problem

Any ban on pharmaceutical products containing pseudoephedrine risks serious disadvantage to thousands of Australians with no assurance it would curtail the spread of illegal drugs, according to the Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI), the industry body representing non-prescription consumer healthcare products.

The Executive Director of the ASMI, Juliet Seifert, said a ban on pseudoephedrine in cold and flu preparations would cause widespread inconvenience in the community.

“There are an enormous number of legitimate users who would be disadvantaged.

“It would force thousands of cold and flu sufferers to take time off work, and would result in many people making unnecessary and costly visits to GPs.

“With such an effective and accessible self-care remedy for the symptoms of cold and flu available to the community, any ban would have undesirable community impacts and cause an extra burden on the healthcare system,” Ms Seifert said.

“Any consideration of a ban would need to be backed by solid evidence. It would need to quantify the health impacts on the community and the workforce, as well as the likelihood of curtailing diversion into illegal methamphetamines

“A range of appropriate measures to curb the illicit diversion of pseudoephedrine from pharmacies has been implemented and there is evidence that these are having a positive effect.

“The impact of these measures needs to be properly assessed and, if necessary, given adequate time to work, rather than leaping into knee-jerk policy responses,” Ms Seifert said.

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

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