



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES
COMMITTEE ON THE HEALTH CARE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

5 December 2013

Mr Andrew Hamilton
Executive Officer
National Herbalists Association of Australia
PO Box 45
CONCORD WEST NSW 2138

RECEIVED
09 DEC 2013

BY:

File Ref: D13/34682

Dear Mr Hamilton

The Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission is undertaking an inquiry into the promotion of false and misleading health-related information or practices.

The Inquiry has been prompted by concerns about the possible lack of proper oversight of individuals and organisations that publish or disseminate information of a purportedly medical nature that is not only contrary to accepted medical practice, but which may be harmful to individual or public health. The Committee will have regard to ensuring the powers of the Health Care Complaints Commission are sufficient and appropriate in addressing concerns raised about the oversight of health-related activities by organisations that provide false and misleading advice with potentially harmful consequences.

The Inquiry is not focused on the many alternative health remedies adopted as part of responsible complementary health care. Nor will it inquire into the many legitimate discussions and studies taking place with the science community about effective health treatments and options.

The Committee invites you to make a submission addressing the specific terms of reference which have been enclosed with this letter. The closing date is **Friday 7 February 2013**, with further evidence to be taken at public hearings in early 2014. Further information about the Committee, including a list of its membership and background information, is also available at the Committee's webpage: <http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/healthcarecomplaints>

Submissions can be lodged via the Committee's webpage, emailed to chccc@parliament.nsw.gov.au or mailed to: The Chair, Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000. Should you have any other queries relating to the inquiry, please contact Mr Jason Ardit, Inquiry Manager, on (02) 9230 2096.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L Williams'.

Mrs Leslie Williams MP
Chair



INQUIRY INTO THE PROMOTION OF FALSE OR MISLEADING

HEALTH-RELATED INFORMATION OR PRACTICES

TERMS OF REFERENCE

That the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission inquire into and report on possible measures to address the promotion of unscientific health-related information or practices which may be detrimental to individual or public health. The Inquiry will focus on individuals who are not recognised health practitioners, and organisations that are not recognised health service providers. The Committee will have particular regard to:

- (a) The publication and/or dissemination of false or misleading health-related information that may cause general community mistrust of, or anxiety toward, accepted medical practice;
- (b) The publication and/or dissemination of information that encourages individuals or the public to unsafely refuse preventative health measures, medical treatments, or cures;
- (c) the promotion of health-related activities and/or provision of treatment that departs from accepted medical practice which may be harmful to individual or public health;
- (d) the adequacy of the powers of the Health Care Complaints Commission to investigate such organisations or individuals;
- (e) the capacity, appropriateness, and effectiveness of the Health Care Complaints Commission to take enforcement action against such organisations or individuals; and
- (f) any other related matter.