

TASKFORCESUBMISSION: submission

NAME: William Kelly

POSITION: Chief Executive Officer

ORGANISATION: Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy

SUBMISSION1: Community pharmacy by virtue of its accessibility to a large proportion of the population is in a most advantageous position to be a major provider of prevention programs.

The Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy (AACP) was established to develop a national approach to consultant pharmacy as an expansion of the professional health role of pharmacy in Australia. AACP develops and administers accreditation and credentialing of pharmacists wishing to provide professional pharmacy services independent of the supply of medications. These services currently include medication reviews in the home and aged care facilities, diabetes medication management and asthma medication management services.

Pharmacists credentialed by AACP are in a unique position to be able to provide these professional services to members of the community who are deemed to be 'at risk' of poor health outcomes owing to obesity, alcohol and tobacco use. In addition, AACP has the capacity to credential additional pharmacists, who after undergoing relevant, up to date, evidence based training, are able to develop and deliver targeted support programs for those who need to make healthy choices. These pharmacists would be in the unique position of being able to offer community-based education and advice about nutrition, physical activity and the management of overweight and obesity.

Obesity:

Currently many community pharmacies offer weight loss programs to their customers. Appropriately credentialed pharmacists would be able to provide an expanded service to their customers rather than the current model which is primarily 'product' focused. A suitable trained and credentialed pharmacist in the area of weight loss would be able to offer advice on a broader range of subjects such as nutrition, healthy/unhealthy food choices and physical activity. The accessibility of pharmacists would mean that encouragement could be offered on a regular basis

Those pharmacists credentialed to provide this service would be trained to provide up to date, relevant, evidence-based information. Pharmacists credentialed with a 'Weight Loss' Credential would be ideally placed to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their actions.

Tobacco use:

Community pharmacy has been involved in the counseling of patient and the sale of Nicotine replacement therapies (NRT) for many years. With additional training, pharmacists could be credentialed to provide an expanded 'quit smoking' service so that smokers are provided with the strongest and most effective encouragement and support to quit in a friendly, non-threatening environment.

Alcohol:

In a similar way, pharmacists could be up skilled and credentialed to help people make healthy choices with respect to alcohol consumption. Brief interventions could be developed and implemented as part of routine practice to assist changes in drinking behaviours and attitudes to alcohol consumption.

Pharmacy has the ability to offer such tailored approaches and services to reach indigenous and other disadvantaged groups by virtue of its broad national network.

The role of pharmacy at the forefront of primary health care in this country means that it is ideally placed to offer real and tangible solutions to tackle the health challenges caused by obesity, tobacco and alcohol and so reduce the burden of disease associated with these factors.

Pharmacy is ideally placed to market and promote healthier choices and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. It can provide integrated, well planned, appropriate and sustainable public education campaigns which are affordable and accessible to the general public.

AACP can provide appropriately trained and credentialed personnel (a skilled workforce) to deliver healthy choice campaigns and, with community pharmacy, deliver evidence based prevention programs that are accessible to all Australians.

AACP proposes that it be invited to join in the national meeting schedule to discuss its proposals.

PRIVACY: yes

SUBMIT: Submit