

Sydney 2000 Declaration

Regional Regulators' Forum

**Hosted by the Therapeutic Goods Administration
and held in association with the
World Self-Medication Industry 4th Asia Pacific Regional Conference
23 November 2000,
Sydney
Australia**

During November 2000 the regulators' of therapeutic goods from 14 countries of the Asia Pacific region met at a Regulators' Forum in Sydney Australia.

The Regulators' Forum considered many current issues and shared information and experiences about the regulation of the self-medication industry. In doing so, the Forum recognised that self-medication, for appropriate conditions, is an important first line of health management in the health care community. It was acknowledged that responsible self-medication provides positive health outcomes for individuals, as well as positive consequences for society as a whole.

The Regulators' Forum recognised that the global nature of the therapeutic goods industry has opened the way for greater information exchange between governments, industry, regulators and consumers. It was acknowledged that in a complex and innovative environment, the ability to respond in a positive and farsighted way is an important feature of international information exchange and a measure of success in harmonising approaches.

The Regulators' Forum considered seven themes as key elements in supporting improved and transparent decision making in order to assist in achieving quality health outcomes.

In so doing they recognised the need to:

- foster partnerships and promote potential regional collaboration through the encouragement of both bilateral and multilateral cooperation programs with consideration of existing international mechanisms;
- promote scientific risk/benefit-based approaches to regulation of the self-medication industry;
- encourage communication about, and mutual understanding of, each other's drug evaluation systems throughout the region;
- encourage potential collaboration on the use of Internet technology on therapeutic goods in the region;
- enhance and promote informed consumer access to self-medication and reasonable choice through truthful and valid advertising of self-medication products;

- ensure therapeutic goods policies are directed towards providing people with safe and effective medicines through attainment of a level of regulation appropriate to the assessed risk/benefit, while ensuring the timely availability of safe, high quality and effective therapeutic goods; and
- explore the establishment of a regional regulator's forum as a vehicle for future cooperation.

The participants at the Regulators' Forum agreed to encourage others associated with the advancement of public health to actively work towards successfully achieving positive outcomes in these areas.

In coming to these recommendations the Regulators' Forum carefully considered recent developments and approaches taken in the self-medication industry.

The Regulators' Forum acknowledged the World Self-Medication Industry Guiding Principles which suggests that more and more knowledgeable, responsible and motivated consumers are taking an active interest in their health. It was recognised and agreed that, because of this, governments should have sound policies in place that both allow and encourage responsible self-medication with products designed for such use.

The participants of the Regulators' Forum recognised the necessity and value of partnerships within the region and agreed to exchange more information with all stakeholders to ensure that government policies and directions adequately respond to the needs and desires of their people in the country and the greater community.

The participants at the Regulators' Forum also agreed to review the implementation of the recommendations of the Sydney 2000 Regulators' Forum next time they convene to ensure the longer term benefits from the close and productive work at the Sydney Forum are realised.

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Chairman
Regulators' Forum
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