

MEDIA RELEASE

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PHARMACY GUILD ACCREDITED AS DEVELOPER OF AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS

The Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations (ABSDO) has accredited the Pharmacy Guild of Australia to develop Australian Standards.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia is responsible for developing and maintaining the Quality Care Pharmacy (QCP) program of Standards, recognised as the quality assurance Standards of choice for community pharmacies in Australia.

ABSDO accreditation will enable the Pharmacy Guild of Australia to develop the next edition of the QCP Standards as an Australian Standard with multiple components. This revision is expected to be published in September 2010, following a stakeholder comment period in April.

Currently comprising 18 elements, the QCP program provides guidance on the management of services and infrastructure associated with community pharmacies. Topics include legal compliance, supply of medicines and devices, advertising, customer service, human resources, safety and security and information technology. Future development areas include risk management such as business continuity planning to support influenza pandemic service delivery.

Following ABSDO's meeting late last week where the decision was taken to accredit the Pharmacy Guild, Norm Crothers, Chairman of ABSDO said: "ABSDO's decision to accredit the Pharmacy Guild of Australia recognises the thorough and robust processes put in place by the Guild to date for the development of these important Standards for the pharmacy profession."

"The Pharmacy Guild has achieved significant credibility and respect amongst the pharmacy industry as a result of this work. Recognising these Standards as an Australian Standard now takes the Guild's program to a new national and international level," he said.

Mr Kos Sclavos, National President of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia said the ABSDO accreditation was the next logical step in the Guild's development of the QCP program of Standards.

"The QCP program celebrated 10 years last year and we felt it was time to take the program to the next level. Demonstrating that these Standards are developed under procedures approved by ABSDO will ensure that they continue to be recognised by the community pharmacy industry as their quality assurance Standards of choice in Australia," he said.

"Accreditation by an independent body such as ABSDO demonstrates compliance to national and international requirements. Community pharmacies can be assured that their Standards are equivalent to world's best practice," he said.

Mr Sclavos added that issuing the QCP Standards as an Australian Standard will allow pharmacists not working in QCP program-accredited pharmacies and pharmacists from other countries to use the Standard for guidance.

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FACT SHEET

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia promotes the value of community pharmacists in the health care system to government, industry and the community.

It operates as a national employers' organisation, with a National Council, National Secretariat, and Branches in all States and Territories. The Guild was established in 1928, bringing together several small retail pharmacy organisations. www.guild.org.au

The Quality Care Pharmacy Program Standards

The Quality Care Pharmacy (QCP) Program Standards were first launched in 1998, with the second edition issued in 2006. A revision is now underway which will be published in September 2010 as an Australian Standard®.

The QCP Standards cover all aspects of the management of quality assurance of services provided by a community pharmacy and the infrastructure to support those services. Comprising of 18 elements, business aspects including legal compliance, delivery of health programs and services, human resources, advertising, safety and security and information technology, are covered in the Standard.

Almost 80 per cent of pharmacies in Australia are accredited to the QCP program.

The Standards Committee, constituted as part of the ABSDO certification, first met in August 2009 to begin the latest review of the Standard.

The Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations

The Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations (ABSDO) operates to encourage and accredit Standards Development Organisations (SDO) in Australia to produce internationally aligned Australian Standard®. www.absdo.org.au

Accreditation ensures Australian Standards retain the quality inherent in the rigorous, transparent and internationally aligned development process.

ABSDO, established by the Council of Standards Australia, provides a valuable mechanism to ensure other SDOs in Australia are able to develop their own industry Standards and have these Standards recognised as an Australian Standard.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia joins the following other ABSDO accredited SDOs:

- Standards Australia
- Australian Forestry Standard Limited
- Communications Alliance
- The Railway Industry Safety and Standards Board
- Seafood Services Australia

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