Herbal Medicine
What is its role in healthcare?

An RMIT Biotechnology Industry Forum
Storey Hall Auditorium
Tuesday 15 March 2005 5.30 pm – 7.00 pm
Melway map 2F E1
RSVP reply form for the
Forum on Herbal Medicine
Please fill out and fax to (03) 9925 7178
RSVP by Tuesday 8 March 2005

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Please tick as appropriate
☐ I am able to attend
☐ I am not able to attend

Please RSVP by Tuesday 8 March
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Herbal Medicine—what is its role in healthcare?

The popularity of herbal medicine is increasing dramatically in most western countries such as Australia. However, the role of herbal medicine in contemporary healthcare systems is yet to be clearly defined. Broader treatment choices and diversity may have advantages but critical issues relating to safety, quality, and effectiveness must be addressed. Given its strengths in medical research, and its leadership in complementary medicine regulation, Australia is well placed to play a leading role in tackling these issues. In addition, the demand for herbal medicines carries prospects for new areas of economic development. These matters will be dealt with by an expert panel of speakers in a forum sponsored by the RMIT Biotechnology Institute.

The forum will be hosted by Professor Neil Furlong, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Research and Innovation, with introductions by Professor Chris Triggle, Director of Biotechnology, and presented by five speakers including Dr Richard Head, who is the Director, Flagship Program on Preventative Health, CSIRO; Dr Daphne Thompson, Senior Policy Advisor, Complementary Medicine, Commercialisation and Clusters with the Victorian Government Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development; Associate Professor Paul Komesaroff from Monash University, Department of Medicine, Alfred Hospital; Associate Professor David Fonda from Monash University is a Consultant Geriatrician at the Cabrini Medical Centre; and Associate Professor Charlie Xue, Head of the Division of Chinese Medicine, School of Health Sciences at RMIT.

Important areas to be covered at the forum include:

- Improving herbal medicine clinical practice
- Integrating herbal medicine into mainstream healthcare
- Progress through research and innovation—an Australian Research Centre for Complementary and Alternative Medicine
- New drugs to treat disease from traditional herbal formulae
- A new industry sector—from herbal crops to quality herbal medicines
- Government regulation herbal medicine practitioner training, and product safety and efficacy.

The program of the forum will include a talk by each speaker and will conclude with a panel consisting of the above experts who will hold a general question and answer session for all to participate in.
Charlie Xue
Associate Professor Charlie Xue is Head of Division of Chinese Medicine, School of Health Sciences at RMIT University. Dr. Xue is a member of the Chinese Medicine Registration Board of Victoria, an Honorary Academic Advisor to the Institute of Chinese Medicine, Chinese University of Hong Kong, and a member of the International Advisory Committee, State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China. In 2004, Dr Xue also became a member of the Board of Directors, the Australian Research Centre for Complementary & Alternative Medicines. He is Co-editor-in-chief of Annals of Traditional Chinese Medicine, and a member of the Editorial Board of the International Journal of Cancer Research. Dr Xue was the President of the First World Congress on Chinese Medicine (WCGM2003), Melbourne, 2003.

Richard Head
Professor Richard Head is Director of CSIRO’s Preventative Health Flagship Program and Affiliate Professor in the Department of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacology at the University of Adelaide. He completed his doctoral studies in Adelaide and after a period of post-doctoral research in the USA and an appointment as Professor of the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, West Virginia University Medical Centre, he returned to Australia and CSIRO, where he has held a number of research and science management positions in CSIRO. The Preventative Health Flagship initiative will be conducted in partnership to help Australians live longer, healthier lives through early diagnosis and prevention.

Professor Richard Head has authored and co-authored over 100 peer-reviewed papers.
David Fonda

Associate Professor David Fonda is a Consultant Geriatrician at Cabrini Medical Centre and an Associate Professor of Medicine at Monash University. He is actively involved in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and research, having published over 50 articles in peer reviewed journals and has been invited to lecture in 20 countries on topics related to aged care and incontinence. He has chaired various national and international groups related to incontinence. More recent work has focused on reducing falls and serious injuries in hospitalised patients. During his Sabbatical leave in 2004 he spent a month in China looking at the role of Traditional Chinese Medicine as it relates to care of older people.

Paul Komesaroff

Professor Paul Komesaroff is a physician, medical researcher and philosopher at Monash University in Melbourne. He is Director of the Monash Centre for the Study of Ethics in Medicine and Society, Physician in Charge of the Menopause Clinic at the Alfred Hospital, and Head of the Hormones and the Vasculature Laboratory at the Monash University Department of Medicine, Alfred Hospital Campus. He is the author of more than 190 scientific articles in the fields of endocrinology, cardiovascular medicine and medical ethics and is the author or editor of eight books.

Daphne Thompson

Dr Daphne Thompson initiated and is leading a project on developing a Natural Medicines Industry in Victoria for the State Government Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development. The focus of the project is to identify where we can partner, add value and leverage the investment of Asian countries in developing their medicine for the global market.

Daphne led the development of national policy and programmes in the Department of Trade and Industry in the UK for commercialising biotechnology in the 1990s and managed the communications strategy for the Department’s Business Innovation programme which included the R&D Scoreboard. She spent several years in medical and biotechnology research.
Neil Furlong

Professor Neil Furlong is Pro-Vice Chancellor and Professor of Applied Colloid Science at RMIT University. He has overall leadership of research strategy, policy and process at RMIT during a period of significant growth of research at the university. Past positions include technical trainee/university scholar/technical officer, ICI Australia Ltd (1966 – 1972) and postdoctoral positions at Brunel University, UK (1975), ETH Zurich (1976 – 1978) and the University of Melbourne (1978 – 1981). He joined RMIT in 1999 after 18 years as an active researcher in colloid chemistry at CSIRO (more than 120 publications)—leaving CSIRO as a Chief Research Scientist and Program Manager (Environmental Technologies and Biosensors).

Professor Furlong held a variety of professional positions in the Royal Australian Chemical Institute (Fellow since 1984) and is currently Honorary Secretary of the Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (Fellow since 1997). Currently a Senior Fellow, School of Chemistry, University of Melbourne; Editor of the international Journal Colloids and Surfaces A and Board member of RMIT Innovations Ltd, Spatial Vision Innovations Ltd, Victorian Partnership for Advanced Computing, Co-Operative Research Centre for Interactive Information and Nanotechnology Victoria Ltd. He was awarded the Grimwade Prize in Industrial Chemistry (University of Melbourne, 1987), the CSIRO Directors Research Prize (1997) and CSIRO Research Medal (MIEX Ion Exchange Project Team), 1999 and Centenary Medal in Applied Chemistry, 2000.

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The support provided by Research & Innovation, RMIT University and by SUN TEN is greatly appreciated.