

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-029

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: PRODUCTS ORDERED FROM OVERSEAS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Siewert asked:

There are several advisory statements on the TGA's website that note the problems that may arise from products ordered from overseas via the internet (eg Hydroxycut, CORE HIV Rapid Test, 'Botanical Slimming Soft Gel' capsules).

What is the TGA doing to publicise these issues to consumers?

Answer:

Problems that may arise from therapeutic products ordered from overseas via the internet are publicised on the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) website. When issues arise they are given prominence on the TGA website homepage under 'hot issues', and also placed permanently on the 'alerts and advisories' page.

The 'TGA media centre' page is also used to alert consumers to issues with specific therapeutic products ordered from overseas via the internet.

General information on 'Medical products and the Internet' is also available to consumers on the TGA website under 'Information for' > 'Consumers', specifying the risks associated with purchasing medical products on the internet.

Consumers can subscribe to a fortnightly email called *TGA Update* which provides information on recent TGA activities, including any recalls and advisory statements. It currently has around 2360 subscribers.

The April 2009 *TGA News*, a publication which is available on the TGA website and to all 2360 subscribers to *TGA Update*, ran a cover story entitled 'Counterfeit medical products'. This article included information on problems that arise from products ordered from overseas via the internet and what consumers need to do to report a problem.