



UROLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

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Urologists welcome findings on Erectile Dysfunction Clinics

The Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand (USANZ), the peak body for urological surgeons, has welcomed the findings of the Federal Parliamentary House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing's Roundtable Forum on Impotence Medications, tabled in the Parliament last night.

The Forum was established in the wake of complaints by men regarding their treatment at Erectile Dysfunction clinics, including the largest provider in Australia, the Advanced Medical Institute (AMI).

In its report, the Committee:

- Urged men suffering with erectile dysfunction (ED) to turn to GPs rather than commercial ED clinics as GPs are far better placed to identify underlying conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, prostate diseases and other medical conditions while treating ED than these clinics. *"The committee believes that the health system collectively needs to better identify ED as an early warning for more serious conditions."*
- Identified as "inappropriate" the use of telemedicine by some clinics for prescribing treatments. *"...the practice of prescribing medication to a previously unknown patient based on a relatively short telemedicine consultation as a first and routine option should, in the committee's opinion, cease."*
- Expressed concern that patients being treated by commercial ED clinics are isolated from the wider health system making it difficult for patients other health care providers to obtain information about treatments being prescribed by ED clinics.
- Expressed concern that consumers are not aware of the fact that AMI's compounded prescriptions are not subject to clinical trials which means there is limited evidence to support their efficacy. These treatments are being prescribed *"despite the fact that there are clinically proven and registered drugs that are recognised as first-line drug therapies for ED."*
- Believes that the number of individual treatments being prescribed by AMI *"verges on mass production and is not in keeping with the justification for exempting compounding from the standards required by the TGA Act,"* which

precludes them from complying with the high standards for safety and efficacy as defined by the Therapeutic Goods Administration regulations.

“Erectile dysfunction is a serious health issue which affects around 40 percent of men over the age of 40, and can leave them vulnerable to exploitation,” says USANZ president, Dr David Malouf.

“We share the Committee’s concern over examples of financial hardship endured by patients locked in contractual agreements with AMI who were unable to get their money back when the treatments didn’t work or were told they faced significant health risks, including death, if they failed to undertake treatment,” said Dr Malouf.

“We are delighted the Committee has identified a number of important issues which if acted on, should lead to better health outcomes for men.”

“As the Committee highlighted, consumers should be aware that the therapies being offered as first line treatments by these clinics fly in the face of recommended treatments for erectile dysfunction by the world’s leading health bodies,” said Dr Malouf.

“The American College of Physicians, the American Urological Association and the European Association of Urology all recommend oral PDE5 inhibitor therapies (such as Cialis, Levitra and Viagra) as first-line treatment for erectile dysfunction, based on extensive reviews of clinical evidence.

“There is strong evidence that these agents are safer, cheaper and more effective than the therapies being prescribed by entrepreneurial clinics such as AMI.

“USANZ recommends men experiencing erectile dysfunction should consult their GPs as a first step for treatment, and supports further education for GPs and the general community on the issue,” said Dr Malouf.

Ends...

The report can be viewed at:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/haa/impotence/report.htm>.

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