



11 May 2011

MEDIA RELEASE

Students encourage the pharmacy profession to provide medical certificates

Pharmacists are trained to make ethical decisions based on their knowledge of medicine and healthcare, the issuing of medical certificates by pharmacists is but one example of such an ethical decision.

Currently there are specified guidelines which are distributed by The Pharmacy Guild of Australia (PGA) and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) that stipulate what disease states are diagnosable by a pharmacist, legal procedures and points to consider when issuing a certificate. The guidelines, if followed correctly, encompass all the information required for a pharmacist to appropriately supply a medical certificate.

In January 2010 NAPSA's Industrial Affairs Committee conducted a survey which was completed by 101 student members. The survey was entitled "Pharmacists Issuing Medical Certificates" and explored whether students were aware this service was available, what resources were on hand to aid in the issue of a medical certificate and what their concerns would be if they were requested by a patient.

The results of the survey indicated that 64% of respondents were aware that pharmacists could issue medical certificates. Students were also asked their opinions on whether pharmacists were adequately trained to issue medical certificates. Less than 50% of respondents believed that pharmacists did have enough training to provide medical certificates to patients, however only 11 out of 91 respondents who said they worked in community pharmacy were aware of the PGA / PSA guidelines.

NAPSA recommend that pharmacy schools incorporate education of medical certificates into their curriculums, if they do not already do so. Education, both in university curriculums and in continuing professional development programs would increase awareness, decrease concern due to persecution and create a more consistent service amongst pharmacies.

If this service is adopted by current practising pharmacists, then it would encourage the upcoming students and interns to also get involved.

The results of the 2010 survey are available on the NAPSA website www.napsa.org.au

MEDIA CONTACT:

Ashleigh Coome
Sarah Sinclair

0417 645 836
0439 620 353