



National Prescribing Service Limited



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Injunction impedes independent information

A recent Federal Court injunction has stopped the publication of an independent review criticising claims about an over-the-counter medicine.

The review by Auspharm Consumer Health Watch questioned the efficacy of Ginkgo Biloba, which is claimed to relieve the symptoms of tinnitus and vertigo. The manufacturer of the product sought an injunction to stop the report. The injunction was granted because the review process was called into question.

Dr Dowden said that the review method was similar to that used by other medical journals, including *Australian Prescriber*. A problem arose because the reviewers did not adhere exactly to the process they had outlined on their website. No judgement was made on the scientific merit of the review.

"Drug bulletins are usually written for health professionals but they also act in the public interest. However, in the Australian case publication was not seen to be in the public interest."

The judge felt the public interest would be served by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) examining the evidence and investigation by the TGA will be 'commercial-in-confidence'. The results will not be disclosed to the public.

Dr Dowden said, "The manufacturers of prescription medicines are gradually becoming more willing to allow the release of information about their products so the complementary medicines industry should follow this lead to increased transparency."

For the complete article visit the *Australian Prescriber* website [www.australianprescriber.com](http://www.australianprescriber.com). *Australian Prescriber* is an independent peer-reviewed journal providing critical commentary on therapeutic topics for health professionals. It is published by National Prescribing Service Limited (NPS), an independent, non-profit organisation for Quality Use of Medicines funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

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