



Australian Prescriber



AN INDEPENDENT REVIEW

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HELPING DOCTORS UNDERSTAND YOU

Use of medical jargon by health practitioners can often lead to confusion and medication mix-ups by consumers, according to a report featured in the latest issue of *Australian Prescriber*.

People sometimes do not take their medicines because their doctor or pharmacist has not given clear instructions, Senior Policy Adviser to the Consumers' Health Forum and one of the report's authors, Ms Helen Hopkins, said.

Communication problems can also occur when people leave hospital. A patient's general practitioner may not know that the hospital has changed the patient's treatment, causing further confusion.

However, Ms Hopkins believes there is significant potential for Australians to use their medicines more effectively.

A key to this improved health outcome is greater clarity in communication between prescribers and consumers.

In addition, doctors need to learn to ask their patients about all their medicines, especially over-the-counter and complementary medicines, she said.

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For a copy of the complete article or information about *Australian Prescriber*, visit the homepage http://www.australianprescriber.com/public_html/default.htm or contact 02 6289 7038 (ph); 02 6289 8641 (fax).

Australian Prescriber is a national independent review of therapeutic topics, designed to assist health professionals in their duties. The journal provides independent comment no advertising is accepted. The current issue of *Australian Prescriber* also looks at hormone replacement therapy, and the risks of travel for people with health problems.