

Hon Annette King
Minister of Health



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Media Statement

Direct to Consumer Advertising

Health Minister Annette King says she has received the independent report from the Department of General Practice at Otago University, and will be studying it this week.

"I have expressed concern in the past about direct-to-consumer advertising. My particular concerns are about branded prescription drugs, not over-the-counter remedies.

"In 2001 I directed the Ministry of Health to review direct-to-consumer advertising, and although we received a lot of submissions, medical professionals generally did not support a ban.

"This time, when I was approached by the three professors who have carried out the independent report, they told me they were concerned about the influences on prescribing patterns and patient safety. I told them they would need to provide me with real evidence, and to get the support of the medical profession and consumers before changes could be made.

"I am making no commitment to doing anything until I have considered the report. A ban on direct-to-consumer advertising would require inter-party support, support from the medical profession, and from the public."

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