

cc: Mr Snowdon
Ms Halton
Professor Baggoley
Ms Morris
Ms Palmer

COPY

MINUTE TO THE MINISTER

MINISTER PLIBERSEK

Critical Date: 20 March 2013

REVIEW OF BLOOD BORNE VIRUS AND SEXUALLY TRANSMISSIBLE INFECTIONS
NATIONAL STRATEGIES

PURPOSE: To:

- SEEK your agreement to an indicative timetable and process for the review of the National Strategies relating to blood borne viruses and sexually transmissible infections, including your view on the potential development of targets; and
- SEEK your approval to publicly release the Mid-Term Review of the Implementation Plan of the five National Strategies (Attachment A refers).

ISSUE:

2. The five National Strategies addressing Australia's response to blood borne viruses (BBVs) and sexually transmissible infections (STIs) finish at the end of 2013 and the sector is anticipating new National Strategies, informed by contemporaneous evidence and addressing recent significant changes in technology, to be implemented in 2014.
3. In Minute N12001308 (Attachment B refers) you approved the Department's approach to reviewing the Sixth National HIV Strategy, which included a Mid-Term Review of the Implementation Plan (IP) of the five National BBV and STI Strategies (the Mid-Term Review).

REASON FOR CRITICAL DATE (including consequences if not met)

4. A joint meeting of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections (MACBBVS) and the Blood Borne Virus and Sexually Transmissible Infections Standing Committee (BBVSS) is scheduled for 21 March 2013. A key item for discussion at that meeting is the development of the BBV and STI National Strategies.

BACKGROUND:

5. The five BBV and STI National Strategies will expire at the end of 2013:
 - Sixth National HIV Strategy 2010-2013;
 - Third National Hepatitis C Strategy 2010-2013;
 - Third National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections Strategy 2010-2013;
 - Second National Sexually Transmissible Infections Strategy 2010-2013; and
 - National Hepatitis B Strategy 2010-2013.

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|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Reform | <input type="checkbox"/> Election Commitment | <input type="checkbox"/> COAG Reform | <input type="checkbox"/> Budget | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other significant policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minority Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislation | <input type="checkbox"/> Appointment | <input type="checkbox"/> Program or grant administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

6. The National Strategies were developed in partnership with community based organisations, state and territory governments, research centres and MACBBVS. They were endorsed by the Australian Health Ministers' Conference in April 2010.
7. On 1 December 2012 the NSW Minister for Health released *NSW HIV Strategy 2012-2015: A New Era*. At its launch, the Hon Jillian Skinner MP noted the document sets 'bold and ambitious targets' and established a framework to work towards the virtual elimination of HIV transmission. The sector is anticipating the imminent release of a HIV Strategy document by the Victorian government.
8. The 20th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014) will be held on 20-25 July 2014 in Melbourne.

RELEVANCE TO ELECTION COMMITMENTS/GOVERNMENT POLICY/COAG REFORM AGENDA:

9. Australia has endorsed the UN Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS (2011), the UN Political Declaration on HIV (2006) and the UN General Assembly Declaration of Commitment on HIV (2001).

COMMENT:

10. The National Strategies provide a framework for national action as well as a signal to the sector of the government's commitment. Reviewing and updating the strategies will ensure that they continue to reflect current evidence and provide an effective mechanism to guide Australia's response to BBVs and STIs.
11. There is widespread support within the BBV and STI sector for the current National Strategies. The documents are used by the sector to establish the context, set objectives, set principles and detail priority populations. However, they are now out-dated, do not recognise commitments such as the 2011 UN Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS and do not contain targets or specific timeframes.

12. On 22 February 2013 BBVSS indicated support for the National Strategies to be revised and updated in partnership with the sector, be more succinct and include targets. (X)

Revision of National Strategies – proposed process and timelines

13. In updating the National Strategies there is support for a balance between time dedicated to the drafting of new strategies and actioning existing policies and strategies. To address this we are proposing to engage technical writers to work with the Department to update the documents in line with contemporary evidence and recent policy commitments as well as to facilitate the consultation process.
14. An indicative timetable of this redevelopment is at Attachment C for your consideration.

Targets vs principles

15. The UN 2011 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS contains very specific time based targets and there is some expectation in the sector that these will be used in the next set of strategies to drive action. This would be in line with the recently released NSW HIV Strategy and we understand that the Victorian Government is considering a similar approach.

16. Targets would assist with improved clarity of objectives and with the effective quantitative and qualitative evaluation. A strategy based on targets would also require agreement to a set of priority actions for focus which would be different to the current comprehensive approach of the national strategy documents.

17. It is recommended that the Department commence the development of a set of targets for your consideration in the context of the revision, but that time is allowed in the development process for consultation with state and territory colleagues on this matter.

18. There may be difficulty in gaining agreement across all jurisdictions for a set of targets given each state's different experiences with the epidemic, varying approach and level of focus on each of the areas covered under the strategies. There is an option in the final instance for the strategy documents to commit to principles, with targets and performance information being handled separately.

Consultations with States and Territories

19. NSW Health has sponsored a paper titled *Report to the Standing Council on Health (SCoH) on the Progress of HIV* which is due to be discussed at SCoH on 19 April 2013. (X)

20. This may be an appropriate opportunity to reaffirm the Government's commitment to this issue through the release of a joint statement with your state and territory colleagues. This could reference the UN 2011 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, recent registration of the Alere HIV point of care test as well as outlining relevant state and territory initiatives.

21. If you wish to pursue this course of action, the Department could prepare a letter for you to send to your colleagues highlighting the importance of a continued commitment to national action in these areas and seeking their agreement to a joint statement in the context of the SCoH meeting.

Mid Term Review

Lead

22. The Mid-Term Review (Attachment A) sought to determine achievements, outstanding priorities and barriers within the implementation of the National Strategies. The final draft of the Mid-Term Review was submitted to the Department in October 2012 then provided to MACBBVS and BBVSS who finalised their comments and feedback in late December.

23. The Department will make some minor changes to the Mid-Term Review report to correct factual inaccuracies and seek acceptance of these changes from the author, David Fowler. Subsequent to this process, the revised Mid-Term Review will be published on the Department's website.

24. The Department has prepared a condensed summary of the findings of the review (Attachment D) which will be used to inform the development of the new National Strategies.

Sensitivity:

25. There is a range of views within the sector about whether all National Strategies should be progressed equally and updated concurrently or whether those with the most change required, i.e. the HIV and viral hepatitis strategies, should be prioritised and updated first. The process and indicative timeframe proposed in this minute recommend reviewing and updating all five existing National Strategies concurrently with the assistance of technical writers.

Financial Implications:

26. Nil.

Compliance with Commonwealth Grant Guidelines:

27. Not applicable.

Legislation/Timing of Proposed Legislative Changes:

28. No applicable.

Timing/Handling:

29. As detailed in the indicative timeframe (Attachment C) it is envisaged that SCoH will be invited to consider the draft revised National Strategies on 8 November 2013. Should there be substantial comments from SCoH at that time, amended documents can be provided to the next SCoH meeting for endorsement in March 2014.

30. The AIDS 2014 conference (Melbourne, July 2014) will present an opportunity for Australia to showcase its HIV response and provide a suitable forum to formally launch the new national HIV strategy.

Consultations:

31. No divisions or agencies were consulted in the preparation of this Minute.

32. The Secretary/Deputy Secretary:

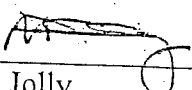
was consulted on the approach of this Minute
has sighted this Minute
none of the above

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

33. The revision process for each of the National Strategies will include forum based consultations with the relevant sector. This may present an opportunity for direct engagement with each of these groups if your diary allows.

RECOMMENDATION

- R1. That you AGREE to the approach and indicative timeframe to review and update the National Strategies for BBVs and STIs at Attachment C.
- R2. That you AGREE to the development of a set of targets for your consideration for potential inclusion in the updated National Strategies.
- R3. That you ADVISE if you require the Department to prepare a letter for state and territory colleagues seeking their agreement to a joint statement at SCoH on 19 April 2013.
- R4. That you APPROVE the release of the Mid-Term Review on the Department's website subsequent to final edits.


 Maria Jolly
 Assistant Secretary
 Health Protection Policy Branch
 OHP
 7 March 2013
 Outcome: 1: Population Health

Contact Officer:
 Maria Jolly x2626
 Health Protection Policy Branch


 TANYA PLIBERSEK

- R1. AGREED/NOT AGREED**
- R2. AGREED/NOT AGREED**
- R3. LETTER TO STATES AND TERRITORIES/
NO LETTER AT THIS STAGE**
- R4. APPROVED/NOT APPROVED**

19.3.13

MINISTER'S COMMENTS:

Advice Rating	1	2	3	4	5	Comments
Timeliness						
Presentation						
Quality of Advice						

Poor Satisfactory Excellent

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A: Mid-Term Review of the Implementation Plan of the five National BBV and STI Strategies
- Attachment B: N12001308 – Minute to the Minister on the Approach to review the Sixth National HIV Strategy
- Attachment C: Indicative Timeframe for Review and Update of National BBV and STI Strategies
- Attachment D: The Mid-Term Review – summary of findings