



MEDIA RELEASE

Minister for Health and Ageing

Tony Abbott MHR

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Government funds Gardasil

The Commonwealth Government will fund the cervical cancer vaccine, Gardasil[®], for girls and women aged 12 to 26 from 2007.

Gardasil[®] will be put on the National Immunisation Program on an ongoing basis for 12 to 13 year old girls to be delivered through schools. The Government will also fund a two year catch-up program for 13 to 18 year old girls in schools and 18 to 26 year old women to be delivered through GPs.

The expected cost of the vaccine is \$436 million between 2006-07 and 2009-10.

The initial submission from the vaccine's maker, CSL, was considered by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) in early November. At that time the PBAC was unable to recommend funding of Gardasil due to concerns about its cost-effectiveness.

Given the possibility of introducing an immunisation program through schools in 2007, I asked the PBAC to consider a revised submission from CSL at an extraordinary meeting. I would like to thank the PBAC for agreeing to this unusual request.

CSL agreed to reduce the price of Gardasil and provided the PBAC with additional information about its long-term effectiveness. CSL has undertaken to make a substantial contribution to any booster program if it becomes necessary in the next 20 years and to the costs of setting up a national register to link vaccination data to later cervical screening records. The PBAC found that Gardasil is cost-effective at the new price offered.

All the usual PBAC processes have been undertaken in the consideration of the revised submission for Gardasil. The accelerated timeframe for consideration has not compromised the quality of the decision-making process.

The Commonwealth Government calls on state and territories governments to make every effort to ensure that arrangements are in place to implement a school-based immunisation program in 2007. We will also work with doctors' groups to establish processes for vaccinations for eligible women who are no longer at school.

Further information is available in the fact sheet at this address:
http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/gardasil_hpv.htm

For more information call Mr Abbott's office on ph 02 6277 7220