



MEDIA RELEASE

Minister for Health and Ageing

Tony Abbott MHR

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Plasma fractionation review committee appointed

A review of Australia's plasma fractionation arrangements to ensure the continued supply of high-quality blood plasma products will be completed by 1 January 2007, as required under the Australia-United States Free Trade Agreement (AUSFTA).

A review committee will be chaired by Mr Philip Flood AO, former Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and former Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. Other members of the committee will be Sir Peter Lawler OBE, Professor Graeme Ryan AC, Mr Peter Wills AC and Professor Kevin Rickard AM.

Plasma fractionation is the separation of blood plasma into a number of proteins for medical use. Plasma products are used mainly to treat trauma patients, provide protection against infection for a variety of conditions, and treat haemophilia and other bleeding disorders.

This review will identify any issues that may arise if Australia introduced increased competition into the provision of plasma fractionation services for Australia. In doing so, it will identify appropriate requirements to be met by producers of plasma products or suppliers of plasma fractionation services to ensure the safety, quality and efficacy of such products and services.

Under the AUSFTA, Australia maintains the right to set requirements for safety, quality and efficacy standards for plasma products. Australia also retains the right to require that plasma products used in Australia may be derived from plasma collected in Australia. The review will consult widely with interested groups.

The independent review will provide its findings to the Commonwealth Government. In line with the National Blood Agreement the Commonwealth, together with the State and Territory Governments, will reach an agreement on the future of plasma fractionation arrangements.

The current policy of voluntary blood donation and the provision of plasma products to patients free of charge will remain and are not being reviewed. Ensuring the safety, quality, efficacy and security of supply of plasma products at every stage of the process will be central to the review.

Further information on the review is at www.health.gov.au/plasmafractionationreview or call 1800 815 855. A list of committee members and brief biographical details are attached.

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

Review Committee Members

Review Chair – Mr Philip Flood AO

Philip Flood is a former Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and former High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. He was also Ambassador to Indonesia and Director-General of AusAID. He was Chair of the Australia-Indonesia Institute between 2001 and 2004. He is a board member of Care Australia, Deputy Chairman of Asialink and a member of the Foreign Affairs Council. Mr Flood headed the Inquiry into Immigration Detention Centre Procedures which reported to the Australian Government in February 2001, and the Inquiry into Australia's Intelligence Agencies, which reported in July 2004.

Sir Peter Lawler OBE

Sir Peter Lawler had a distinguished career in the Australian Public Service spanning over 42 years. He joined the Department of Post-War Reconstruction as an economics graduate in 1944 and undertook postgraduate training in several European cities while posted to the British Cabinet Office in 1952-1953. Sir Peter's later appointments included Deputy Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department/Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (1964-1972), Secretary of the Department of the Special Minister of State (1972-1975) and Secretary of the Department of Administrative Services (1975-1983). Between 1983 and 1986 he was Australian Ambassador to Ireland and the Holy See. Sir Peter was knighted in 1981 and in 1986 received the Papal honour, Knight Grand Cross of the Order of Pius IX.

Associate Professor Kevin A. Rickard AM

Professor Kevin Rickard AM, RFD, FRCP (Lond), FRACP, FRCP (Edin), was haematologist at Sydney's Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPAH) for 36 years, relinquishing this position in 2005. He was Director of the RPAH Haemophilia Centre and the Thrombosis & Haemostasis Unit within The Institute of Haematology. He is Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Sydney, Consultant Emeritus to RPAH and Consultant Emeritus in Haematology and Transfusion Medicine to the Australian Defence Force. As Surgeon Captain RANR he has been Consultant in Pathology to the Surgeon General ADF and Consultant in Haematology to the Royal Australian Navy. In addition, he has had a longstanding association with The World Federation of Haemophilia, holding a number of positions including Vice President Developing World and Chairman of the federation's world-wide network of International Haemophilia Training Centres. He is a past president of the Haematology Society of Australia and also a past president of the Australian Society of Blood Transfusion.

Professor Graeme Ryan, AC

Professor Ryan, a pathologist, is Director of Research Strategy at The Alfred Hospital, Melbourne, and Chairman of the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital Board of Directors. His other current appointments include Governor of the Ian Potter Foundation, Professor Emeritus at the University of Melbourne and Chairman of the NHMRC Special Expert Committee on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (SECTSE). His previous positions include Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences at the University of Melbourne (1986-1995) and Chief of Clinical Services and Member of the Board of Directors, Inner and Eastern Health Care Network (1996-2000). Professor Ryan has

also served as a board member on numerous medical research institutes and community organisations. He is the author of some 150 published articles and book chapters.

Mr Peter Wills, AC

Mr Wills is the founder and Chairman of CRI, one of Australia's leading property and infrastructure companies. He is notable for his contribution to the support of medical research in Australia. He was Director (1990-1993) and Chairman (1993-2001) of the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, as well as Chairman (1990-1993) and subsequently Director (1993-2001) of the Garvan Research Foundation. Mr Wills chaired the Health and Medical Research Strategic Review ("the Wills Review") and its Implementation Committee (1998-2000). More recently he has been Strategic Adviser to the Investment Review of Health and Medical Research (2003- 2004). Mr Wills is a past member of the Biotechnology Consultative Group (1999-2001), the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council (2001-2002) and Chairman of the Australia Research Council (2001-2002). He is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management, a Fellow of the Company Directors' Association and a Trustee and Member of the Board of Governors of the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA).