



THE HON SUSSAN LEY MP

Minister for Health
Minister for Sport

MEDIA RELEASE

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Appointments to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee

Health Minister Sussan Ley today announced the appointment of Professor Andrew Wilson as the new Chair of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC).

“I congratulate Professor Wilson on his appointment and look forward to continuing to receive the sound scientific advice that the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee is renowned for,” Ms Ley said.

“The PBAC’s advice enables the Government to improve the listing of drugs on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) at a price that individuals and community can afford.”

Ms Ley also announced that new legislation would be introduced shortly that would seek to streamline the operations of the PBAC in recognition of an increasing workload of complex matters that the committee is regularly asked to consider.

The new legislation will propose to increase the PBAC membership from 18 to 21, to create a new Deputy Chair position and to increase flexibility for the appointments to both the Chair and the Deputy Chair positions could be made on either full-time or part-time basis.

“At the 2013 election the Abbott Government committed to improving the listing process of drugs on the PBS,” Ms Ley said.

“Expanding the capacity of the PBAC to deal with complex medicines is another important step to ensure Australians benefit from new medicines sooner.”

Ms Ley said Professor Wilson is a highly respected medical specialist in the area of cardiovascular disease.

Professor Wilson holds senior academic positions with the Menzies Institute at Sydney University and previously at universities in Queensland. He also served in a number of senior positions in the health departments of those states. He has firsthand experience on the workings of the PBAC having served a number of years ago as a member of the committee.

“I look forward to Professor Wilson’s work to provide Government with high-quality advice on the comparative effectiveness and cost of medicines subsidised on the PBS and vaccines on the National Immunisation Programme (NIP), and to continue to enhance the transparency of the PBAC process and the patients input into the PBAC’s deliberations,” Ms Ley said.

Professor Wilson will also lead the recently announced review of the PBAC’s methodological guidelines for the preparation of applications to incorporate international best practice and remove any unnecessary regulatory burden on the pharmaceutical industry while safeguarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the PBS.

Ms Ley said this review is important to ensure Australia’s world leading PBS continues to benefit future generations.

Professor Wilson will continue to lead the current post-market review of the Life Saving Drugs Programme (LSDP) which is nearing its completion, prior to taking up his new appointment as the Chair of the PBAC at the July 2015 meeting.

In addition to the appointment of Professor Wilson, Ms Ley announced two additional appointments to the PBAC today, Dr Peter Grimison, a medical oncologist at the Chris O’Brien Lifehouse in Sydney and Professor Jonathan Craig, Senior Staff Specialist at Children’s Hospital at Westmead. Professor Craig is also a member of the Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC). Both have been nominated by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP).

“The appointments of Dr Grimison and Professor Craig and their specific expertise reflect the growing number of applications for cancer and other complex treatments, as well as the need to continue to strengthen the alignment between PBAC and MSAC for complex technologies”, Ms Ley said.

All appointments are for a four-year period.

ENDS

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