



## **THE HON SUSSAN LEY MP**

Minister for Health  
Minister for Sport

### **MEDIA STATEMENT**

1 September 2015

#### **New drug listing Keytruda to treat melanoma**

From today, patients with melanoma have access to breakthrough medicine Keytruda on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

The Commonwealth Government will invest \$57 million to list the breakthrough melanoma drug to improve quality of life for 1,100 Australian patients and make the \$150,000 per year treatment affordable.

Patients will now pay \$6.10 if they are concessional patients or \$37.70 for general patients

The listing follows passage of the Government's PBS reform package through the Senate recently and delivers on our promise to list new medicines as quickly as possible.

It complements \$1.3 billion from the 2015/16 Budget for other melanoma medicines as well as drugs to treat breast cancer, blindness and shingles.

Treatment using pembrolizumab (Keytruda®) currently costs patients with metastatic melanoma up to \$156,130 per year without taxpayer subsidy through the PBS.

Since coming to office, the Commonwealth has now approved 742 new and amended listings to the PBS, with a benefit of \$3.2 billion to Australian patients.

This compares with only 331 new listings in Labor's final term.

Keytruda's listing demonstrates the importance of ensuring that spending on existing drugs is as efficient as possible, so breakthrough medicines like Keytruda® can continue to be listed.

Since coming to office in September 2013, the Commonwealth has listed the following medicines, among others, on the PBS:

- Mekinist (2015) – BRAF-positive Metastatic Melanoma – \$594 million – \$131,000 per patient if not subsidised through the PBS
- Perjeta, Herceptin and Kadcylla (2015) – Breast Cancer – \$191 million combined – \$82,000 per patient if not subsidised through the PBS
- Crizotinib (2015) – Lung Cancer – \$60 million – \$80,000 per patient if not subsidised through the PBS
- Lemtrada (2015) – Relapsing, Remitting Multiple Sclerosis – \$50 million – \$70,000 per patient if not subsidised through the PBS
- Lucentis (2015) – Retinal Vein Occlusion (RVO) and Diabetic Macular Oedema (DME) (blindness) – \$541 million – \$10,000 per patient if not subsidised through the PBS

**ENDS**

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