



## **THE HON SUSSAN LEY MP**

Minister for Health  
Minister for Sport

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

13 March 2015

#### **More consumer consultation in PBS process**

The Minister for Health Sussan Ley has welcomed moves to give consumers and patient groups a greater say around the listing of new medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC), the independent expert body appointed by the Australian Government to recommend new medicines for listing, trialled its first consumer hearings this week.

Ms Ley said consumer groups for Hepatitis C, melanoma, chronic lymphoma and inflammatory bowel disease presented to the committee.

“These hearings provide a new opportunity for the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee to directly communicate with the most important group of all – the patient,” Ms Ley said.

“The conversations with consumer organisations to share information, understanding and evidence about the benefits, harms and costs of new medicines is further demonstration of the Australian Government’s commitment to wider consultation.

“I want to hear from a range of voices about the best ways patients can continue to access the medicines they need, when they need them and at a price both they and the taxpayers can afford.”

The consumer hearings build on current processes for the PBAC, which comprises doctors, health professionals, health economists and consumer representatives, to engage with consumers about medicines being considered for PBS listings.

The importance of consumer views when considering medicines for subsidy has been long recognised, with a consumer representative on the PBAC for at least the past 15 years.

Ms Ley said she was looking forward to the outcomes from these community consultations.

“I am a strong advocate for consumers being involved in the consultation and decision making processes that take place within Government and I applaud the PBAC for reaching out to patient groups,” Ms Ley said.

Since November 2008, the agenda for the PBAC has been published in advance of the meeting to allow individual consumers and clinicians and their member groups to be able to provide feedback on the individual quality of life impacts and the societal impact of access to medicines.

Drug companies already have the opportunity to present to the PBAC on their submissions.

**ENDS**

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