



Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Consumer Consultative Committee (CCC)

HTA CCC Communique – Thursday 19th October 2023 24th meeting of the HTA CCC

Attendees

Consumer representatives from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) and its subcommittee, the Drug Utilisation Sub Committee, the Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) and its subcommittees, and the Life Saving Drugs Program (LSDP) Expert Panel.

Departmental representatives from the Consumer Evidence and Engagement Unit (CEEU) and the Office of Health Technology Assessment (OHTA).

Outcomes

The Chair (Jo Watson) provided an overview of her activities since the last HTA CCC meeting on 11 May 2023, including: PBAC and post-PBAC meetings; responses to the [capability review](#) of the Department of Health and Aged Care (the Department); briefings provided for the [HTA Policy and Methods Review](#); proposed CEEU restructuring; stakeholder meetings; activities across consumer networks; and the Consumer Reference Group. The Chair also provided notes on membership activities, including updates to CCC membership, changes to the recruitment process of HTA committee members, and upcoming HTA committee membership renewals. The Chair noted the Prostheses List Advisory Committee was replaced by Medical Devices and Human Tissue Advisory Committee (MDHTAC) in June 2023, with existing subcommittees replaced by Expert Clinical Advisory Groups (ECAGs). The Chair noted the recruitment of a consumer representative for MDHTAC is still being finalised.

The Chair discussed upcoming activities, advising the response to the 2021 House of Representatives inquiry ('Zimmerman Inquiry') is expected to be published before the end of 2023, and noted the anticipated relevance to the HTA review. The Chair discussed the importance of supporting consumer networks while HTA review agendas/communiques are published, and outlined developments to the co-design of the Enhanced Consumer Engagement Process, as part of the [Strategic Agreement](#) between the Commonwealth and Medicines Australia. The Chair noted the workplan schedule for the HTA Policy and Methods Review, with consultation input for Phase 1 closing in July 2023, and upcoming consultations yet to be confirmed. The Chair described the [findings of the first consultation](#), which echoed the findings of the CEEU's [Conversation for Change Report 2023](#), outlining the issues relating to the: current access programs; formation of item restrictions; gap between Commonwealth and state implementations; low visibility of various aspects of listings; need for consistent collection of data; capacity of patient groups; and time relating to resubmissions.

In the CEEU update, the CEEU Lead advised the activities of the Unit between May and October 2023, including MSAC and PBAC consultation activities, the HTA International (HTAi) conference in June 2023, and the publishing of the *Conversations for Change Report 2023*. The Lead outlined the 'consultation toolkit' project that is currently underway, which seeks to create

resources to build and inform consumer knowledge, with plain language and consistent terminology. The Lead noted other projects the CEEU is working on, including: updating the MSAC consultation process; developing the HTA consumer committee members' induction pack; establishing a feedback loop for consumers post Committee meetings; and the ongoing evaluation of the summary of information for patients (SIP) project. The Chair noted the CEEU is going through a number of changes, with plans to recruit additional staff and also to be restructured as a separate entity from the HTA Support Unit.

The CEEU Lead provided background on the co-design commitments of the Strategic Agreement (2022-2027), noting the establishment of the [Enhanced Consumer Engagement Process \(ECEP\)](#) co-designed with consumers. The Lead outlined the progress that has taken place in 2023, starting with the co-design proposal developed by the consumer reference group starting in March 2023, and the proposed work plan for co-design group consideration that was developed with consumer groups in October 2023. Workshop 1 of the co-design process is scheduled to take place in November 2023 with a consultation on initial ECEP prototypes to follow over the subsequent months.

A representative from the OHTA's MSAC secretariat team and a member of the CEEU presented proposed changes to the current MSAC consultation survey. They advised they had also presented these changes to the MSAC Executive team and MSAC ESC, and collected feedback. The proposed plan suggested the following changes: the alignment of the MSAC survey with current PBAC consultation survey; the use of SKIP-logic in survey design to allow for specific subsets of questions for different types of respondents; the collection of postcode and other diversity measures throughout the survey; and the review of current survey questions for health professionals, individuals, and consumer organisations for more meaningful answers from each respondent type. CCC members provided an array of feedback, noting the need for an out-of-session meeting with consumer members across MSAC and its sub-committees to review the proposed changes in more detail.

The Chair noted that over time, CCC members have felt some things were missing during inductions to their respective HTA committee roles, including mentoring programs from other experienced members. The Chair advised earlier mentoring pilot programs have taken place, with evaluations being finalised next month. The Chair noted changes within Departmental structures mean induction support from Committee secretariats is different now than in the past. The Chair described potential factors that need to be considered in order to develop a contemporary induction pack, including: the current processes and available resources; the relevant Department and committee personnel; where committees and sub-committees fit into the overall HTA organisation within the Department; what is expected of CCC members pre-, during, and post-meetings; and how to provide a broader overview of the CCC when members first join.

The next CCC meeting is scheduled to be held in February 2024.