



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care

Health Technology Assessment Policy and Methods Review Reference Committee

Communique – 14 December 2023 meeting

The Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Policy and Methods Review (Review) Reference Committee (Committee) met by video conference on 14 December 2023.

Representatives from Canteen, Asthma Australia and Crohn's and Colitis Australia, and health professionals were invited to speak to the Committee about paediatric patients' access to treatments. Members representing the CoDesign Working Group were invited to speak to the Committee about the Working Group's progress.

Support staff from the Review Secretariat in the Department of Health and Aged Care (Department) and the probity advisor also attended.

What did the Committee discuss?

Deep dive into barriers to access for paediatric patients.

The Committee heard presentations and held discussions with paediatric health professionals and representatives from Canteen, Asthma Australia and Crohn's and Colitis Australia. The Committee noted views expressed about issues that arise when prescribing on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme for children; the Therapeutic Goods Administration (i.e. market authorisation status of medicines); and issues arising for particular conditions or patient cohorts, including acts of commission and acts of omission in relation to PBS prescribing restrictions.

A particular problem preventing reimbursement on the PBS is lack of TGA approval for paediatric indications. The Committee requested an update from the TGA regarding its approval processes for paediatric populations in circumstances when the medicine is approved for adult populations, and how the Australian approval processes compare with those of international regulators for granting approval for paediatric populations.

Issues and options for reform on clinical evaluation methods in HTA - continued

The Committee continued its discussion on methods for clinical evaluation, and discussed the remaining topics not covered under the HTA expert paper on HTA methods for clinical evaluation (this was further to the discussion at the Committee meeting on 1 December 2023).

Consumer engagement in HTA co-design processes

The Committee heard a presentation and received an update on the co-design of an Enhanced Consumer Engagement Process, from the Chair and members representing the

Co-Design Working Group. The Committee heard that the Working Group held a workshop on 15 and 16 November 2023, which included a stocktake of areas for enhancement. The Committee noted that the Co-Design Working Group intends to undertake open consultation on draft recommendations, and that its report is to be delivered on 30 June 2024.

Introduction to overarching pathways

The Committee considered what an overarching evaluation pathway for different types of PBAC submissions to recommendation, which incorporates options considered to date by the Committee, would look like. The Committee considered the impact on timeframes at some key points within the pathway was unclear and needed further exploration.

Other Business

The Committee noted an update on the Government's response to the Inquiry into Approval Processes for New Drugs and Novel Medical Technologies in Australia.

Meeting close and next meeting

The Committee noted the next meeting will be held on 15 December 2023.