



# Health Technology Assessment Policy and Methods Review Reference Committee

## Communique – 14 November 2023 meeting

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

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?**

#### **Issues and options for reform following the deep-dive on Vaccines**

The Committee deliberated over issues and options arising from the deep-dive discussion on Vaccines at its meeting on 22 September 2023, which included the Chair of Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI), representatives from the Department's Immunisation Branch, immunisation industry representatives and the Director of the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance. The Committee recalled key matters previously discussed in the deep-dive included potential opportunities for streamlining vaccine consideration by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) and the ATAGI, different approaches to HTA-decision making for vaccines and ATAGI's role in providing advice on vaccine submissions to the PBAC.

The Committee noted that in addition to providing advice to the PBAC on vaccine submissions, ATAGI provides a wide range of advice including contributing to public health recommendations and on the use of vaccines. The Committee noted that Australia is one of the few countries where the recommendations for the inclusion of vaccines onto the National Immunisation Program (NIP) do not directly come from a national immunisation advisory group, but also requires consideration by an HTA body (PBAC). The Committee noted that the consideration of vaccines by both ATAGI and the PBAC results in an increased timeframe for vaccines from market approval to listing on the NIP in comparison to the timeframe for medicines from market approval to listing on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. The PBAC noted that the clinical data for a vaccine for listing on the NIP is considered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration, ATAGI and the PBAC.

The Committee discussed a number of potential options to streamline the HTA process for vaccines and ensure timely access based on the matters raised in the deep-dive. The Committee agreed to further refine these options for the Consultation 2 Options Paper.

### **Other Business**

The Committee noted that the Centre for Health Economics Research and Evaluation has been working to include further information in its papers on economic evaluation and funding

and purchasing decisions and managing uncertainty in response to feedback. The Department advised the Committee that the updated papers will be circulated for consideration.

### **Meeting close and next meeting**

The Committee noted the next meeting will be held on 1 December 2023.