

# Access to Medicines Working Group

## Communique

### 25 February 2022

The Access to Medicines Working Group (AMWG) met via videoconference on 25 February 2022. Attendees included representatives from Medicines Australia, the pharmaceutical industry and the Department of Health (the Department).

The Department provided updates on each of the AMWG subgroups for members' consideration. The Subgroups are the Biosimilar Policy Subgroup, Streamlined Pathways Subgroup, PBS Transparency & Efficiencies Subgroup and Comparator Selection Subgroup.

Members noted that since the last AMWG meeting in July 2021, the biosimilar market share continues to slowly but steadily increase.

Stage 2 PBS process improvements, which were implemented on 1 January 2021, have now been in place for 12 months. The Streamlined Pathways Subgroup (SPS) continues to monitor metrics gauging the success of the process improvements post implementation. Members noted that the Joint Oversight Committee has endorsed 12 additional metrics, proposed by the SPS, to gauge the success of Stage 2 process improvements. These additional metrics will be published in the latter half of 2022. The SPS will continue to explore additional Stage 2 metrics before the next AMWG meeting. Members also noted that a second report of the Stage 1 metrics is available on the PBS website.

Through updates on the Transparency and Efficiencies Subgroup, members noted that the *National Health (Pharmaceuticals and Vaccines – Cost Recovery) Regulations 2009* will sunset and be replaced with remade regulations on 1 April 2022.

Members noted that the subgroups of the AMWG had achieved their primary goals and agreed to dissolve the existing AMWG subgroups prior to the commencement of the new Strategic Agreement with the Medicines Industry on 1 July 2022. It was agreed that upon commencement of the new Strategic Agreement new subgroups may be formed, fit for the specific purposes of that agreement. Members noted that current mechanisms in place for the monitoring of work delivered by the SPS will continue within the Department.

Members discussed the priorities of the AMWG under the forthcoming Strategic Agreement and agreed that the AMWG should work towards increasing the group's efficiency and reducing its administrative burden. Members also noted that the distribution of work between Medicines Australia and the Department will be further explored. Members agreed to discuss this matter further prior to the commencement of the new Strategic Agreement.

The AMWG members will reconvene at the next meeting which is expected to be held in June 2022.