

Access to Medicines Working Group - 19 August 2010

20 May 2011

The Access to Medicines Working Group (AMWG) had its tenth meeting on 19 August 2010, the first after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Commonwealth and Medicines Australia on 6 May 2010.

The AMWG approved the implementation plan for projects outlined in the MoU, and noted progress to date in commencing the various projects. The AMWG undertook to manage and monitor the joint projects and provide reports to the Minister on the progress of implementation.

Recognising the increased workload involved in managing and monitoring the projects under the MoU, the AMWG approved the establishment of an additional subgroup to oversee the implementation of projects while the existing subgroup will focus on the policy agenda.

The AMWG discussed the draft program prepared for the Joint Medicines Policy Conference 2011 and agreed on the overall theme for the conference and contributed to suggested topics. The AMWG emphasised the need for further engagement on the part of consumers both in planning the conference and in the conference itself. The conference will be held on 30-31 August 2011. Further information about the conference will be published in the coming months.

The AMWG continues to explore ways in which speedier access to medicines can be ensured including through parallel processing of applications for the regulatory and reimbursement processes, managed entry of innovative drugs to the subsidised market and early engagement with the industry. Two pilot projects aimed at streamlining the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) processes, 'Early and Extended Evaluation of Complex PBAC Submissions' and 'Enhanced Pre-PBAC Submission Meetings' have been conducted under the auspices of the AMWG. These projects will be evaluated once the submissions have received consideration by the PBAC.

Subsequent to the August meeting, a workshop supported by the AMWG on influences in the drug development process, was held on 29 September 2010. This workshop aimed to explore the government and industry perspectives on how health technology assessment (HTA) influences investment decisions for the development of new medicines locally and internationally.



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