

Access to Medicines Working Group (AMWG) Communique - February

AMWG Meeting:

The fifth meeting of the reinvigorated AMWG occurred on 19 February 2015.

Attendees:

Attendees included co-Chairs: Mr Andrew Stuart (Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health) and Mr Martin Cross (Chairman of Medicines Australia); representatives from Medicines Australia and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Division of the Department of Health.

Purpose:

The purpose of the meeting was to update the AMWG on progress against the four work-streams:

1. Post-market reviews
2. Managed Access Programme (formerly Managed Entry Scheme)
3. Section 99ACB of the *National Health Act 1953*
4. Transparency of PBS processes

Progress:

The AMWG sub-groups provided verbal reports to the AMWG on the progress and achievements to date.

Post Market reviews

Work on an agreed post-market review framework was agreed as completed. The group discussed opportunities for an announcement of the agreement and publication of the new framework.

Managed Access Programme

Substantive progress has been made on developing a workable framework for a Managed Access Programme. The group considers the framework will be ready for broader review at the March 2015 PBAC meeting.

99ACB

The sub-group, including GMIA, has been unable to resolve fundamental points of disagreement on the legislative intent discussion. The group has agreed to try a 'step-wise' approach to deal with issues relating to 99ACB. Medicines Australia will develop an alternative step-wise proposal for consideration.

Transparency

Medicines Australia and Health are developing a road map of transparency activities and projects. Medicines Australia will provide feedback on a Transparency and Efficiency initiatives table developed by Health. To progress the sub-group work both parties will work on condensing transparency principles at a higher level.

Communication:

At the end of March 2015 in the wake of the PBS Access and Sustainability negotiations and the 2015-16 Budget process, the AMWG was temporarily suspended. Thus the delay in publishing the 19 February AWMG meeting communique.

The AMWG is expected to recommence in September 2015.