



Drug Utilisation Sub-Committee Outcome Statement 2 – 3 February 2023

The Drug Utilisation Sub-Committee (DUSC) of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) held its 107th meeting on the 2 – 3 February 2023.

DUSC has a national focus of excellence in collecting, analysing and interpreting data on the utilisation of medicines in Australia for use by the PBAC. Review of the utilisation of medicines is an essential management tool in facilitating the objectives of the National Medicines Policy.

The PBAC is also committed to understanding consumer perspectives and integrating them into consideration of medicines and vaccines. Consumers are able to provide their views about medicine utilisation reviews to the PBAC via a [web interface](#).

Submissions to the PBAC

DUSC noted that eight category 1, 14 category 2, and 10 standard re-entry, two early-resolution, and five early re-entry submissions had been received for the March 2023 meeting of PBAC. DUSC provided detailed advice to the PBAC on projected usage and financial cost for the submissions where there was high cost, uncertain utilisation, first medicine in class or quality use of medicines concerns. The agenda for the March 2023 PBAC meeting can be found on the [PBS website](#).

Utilisation of PBS Listed Medicines

DUSC regularly examines utilisation of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) items when there is at least 24 months of prescription data available and where DUSC or the PBAC has highlighted items of interest. When an analysis of utilisation is to be undertaken sponsors are notified, provided with a copy of the report and an opportunity to comment prior to the DUSC meeting. Reviews to be considered by the PBAC are also published in the [PBAC meeting agenda](#). All reports, sponsor comments and DUSC assessment of the reports are subsequently provided to the PBAC.

DUSC reviewed the utilisation of the following PBS medicines in February 2023:

Evolocumab for hypercholesterolaemia

DUSC reviewed the utilisation of evolocumab for all of its listed PBS indications: homozygous familial hypercholesterolaemia, heterozygous familial hypercholesterolaemia and non-familial hypercholesterolaemia. In 2021, 6,119 patients were supplied 48,483 evolocumab prescriptions. There was a greater proportion of patients treated with evolocumab for non-familial hypercholesterolaemia compared to familial hypercholesterolaemia.

DUSC requested that the report be provided to the PBAC for consideration.

Impact of regulatory reforms on the utilisation of opioids

DUSC reviewed the utilisation of PBS-listed opioid analgesics to examine the impact of the 1 June 2020 regulatory reforms and associated PBS listing changes for opioid analgesics. Between 2020 and 2021 there was a 4.2% decrease of the number of supplied prescriptions, a 10.8% decrease in the number of supplied defined daily doses (DDDs) and a 0.3% decrease of the number of treated patients. Tapentadol was the only medicine in the opioids market with increased utilisation.

The percentage of original prescriptions with prescribed repeats decreased from 13% in 2019 to 8% in 2021. For PBS listings that had the pack size reduced from 1 June 2020, only a very small proportion of these new listings were prescribed with repeats. Of the 14.5 million original prescriptions written in 2021, approximately 4% were written for listings of reduced pack sizes.

DUSC requested additional analyses be presented to the committee, including medication consumption in relation to packs and doses supplied to incident and longer term users and the utilisation of opioids in the private market.

DUSC requested that the report be provided to the PBAC for consideration.

Upcoming Utilisation Analysis of PBS Listed Medicines

Utilisation of the following medicines was selected for consideration at future DUSC meetings.

Analysis of single or multiple medicines in a treatment area

- Omalizumab for severe chronic spontaneous urticaria
- Olaparib for ovarian, fallopian tube or primary peritoneal cancer

An outcome statement will be available following each meeting of DUSC. For further information, please contact the DUSC Secretariat at DUSC@health.gov.au.

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Chair
Drug Utilisation Sub-Committee