

ACCESS TO MEDICINES WORKING GROUP (AMWG) COMMUNIQUE

AMWG Meeting:

The first meeting of the reinvigorated AMWG occurred on Monday 16 June 2014.

Attendees:

Attendees included co-Chairs Mr David Learmonth (Deputy Secretary, Department of Health) and Dr Martin Cross (Chair of Medicines Australia); representatives from the Medicines Australia secretariat; industry and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Division (PBD) of the Department of Health.

Purpose:

The purpose of the meeting was to agree the objectives, membership, structure and governance of the AMWG and sub-groups. The AMWG agreed the membership at this point in time is constituted by Medicines Australia and the Department, but agreed that consultation with other stakeholders such as the generic industry will be required when issues may impact on them.

The AMWG agreed the group and subgroup structure to operationalise the AMWG objectives.

Both parties committed best endeavours to complete the first four projects on the AMWG agenda within a six month timeframe with regular meetings to occur at a reasonable and agreed frequency to ensure progress.

The first four projects proposed for work to December 2014 are:

- Managed entry scheme
- Section 99ACB of the National Health Act
- Transparency of PBS processes, and
- Post-market reviews

Progress will be reported to the Minister for Health at appropriate intervals.

Objectives:

The objectives were agreed as follows:

1. To ensure patients have timely access to the latest medicines at a price that is acceptable to companies and that the government and the community can afford
2. To discuss potential unintended consequences of PBS Reforms
3. To streamline and find efficiencies in the process to reduce the workload for the Department and the industry and serve the needs of the community, patients and the Government
4. To ensure that agreed outcomes and solutions are practical and can be operationalised.

Communication:

The AMWG will publish regular communiques to provide updates on progress following each AMWG meeting.