

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30/31 May 2011

Question: E11-008

OUTCOME 2: Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: BOWEL CANCER DRUG NOT LISTED ON THE PHARMACEUTICAL  
BENEFITS SCHEME

Written Question on Notice

Senator Xenophon asked:

The Mercury reported the story of a woman who is facing a bill of \$1500 a week to treat her bowel cancer because the drug she needs (Erbix) is not listed on the PBS.

- a) Has the drug's manufacturer made a submission to have the drug listed on the PBS?
- b) Will the Government be approaching the manufacturer to encourage them to make a submission?
- c) Given that the drug is already approved in the UK and US, and that the Gut Foundation estimates that over 2000 people in Australia could benefit from its listing, what other action will the Government be taking on this issue?

Answer:

a), b) and c)

On 21 June 2011, the Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon Nicola Roxon MP, announced that the PBS-listing of cetuximab (Erbix<sup>®</sup>) would be extended from 1 September 2011 to include the treatment of patients with a specific form of colorectal cancer (K-RAS wild type metastatic) who have not responded to chemotherapy, subject to final listing arrangements being met.