

To whom it may concern

I have been using the drug Xolair for the past 6 years. In December 2010 I was informed by the drug company that the PBAC committee had recommended the drug for listing on the PBS. I would have to say I thought this was the best Christmas present I could have received how wrong could I be.

Before commencing on this drug in 2005 I had several admissions to intensive care due to severe allergic reactions, I had been suspended from my employment because I could not guarantee that I would not have another allergic reaction. What makes the situation worse for me is I have anaphylaxis to latex so hospitals are just not safe for me more so the public system which is supposed to be there for all australians.

My treating specialist said I had no other treatment options open to me as all other treatment avenues had been exhausted. He was not even sure if Xolair would work but as there was no other treatment options if I could afford it to give it a go.

After receiving assistance from my private health fund to trial the drug for a 6 month period my life changed dramatically. For the first time in 20 years I could see out my eyes, I didn't need to hold them open to see, I was not using 10 family boxes of tissues a day, I could actually breathe without constantly wheezing and my anaphylactic reactions had become manageable without needing admission to hospital and I no longer needed Depo Medrol injections weekly.

Whilst the drug has changed my life and I don't want to go back to the life prior to Xolair my life remains a constant stress. Can I afford the next dose for the fortnight. If I don't continue it then I also lose the ability to live a normal life, being able to work full time and then spending time back in intensive care wards.

Whilst I acknowledge the cost of the drug is high and that it doesn't work for everyone, it is still far more cost effective than intensive care, and sickness benefits. I have also been able to reduce my other PBS medications as I now have better control of my condition.

If the government is serious about practising preventative health and keeping people out of hospitals, and keeping them for those that really need them I just wish they could have seen how lived my life for the 20 years before Xolair and see how much this drug has helped me.

I would like to know what process the government applies to determine what they are going to list, are they medical professionals I think not. They are playing with people's lives, mean while my life is one big uncertainty with death as a possible outcome.

I feel if the PBAC committee recommends a drug for listing then the government should not be able muck around with this process. The PBAC committee has done all the cost effectiveness and assessed the risks and the benefits. It feels like it is becoming a political

vote scoring game. What is the point of having a PBAC committee if the government is going to turn around and make its own decisions on what to list.

Please abolish the government's ability to defer drugs recommended by the PBAC committee. I am desperate to be able to continue to live a wonderful active life like most people enjoy but I need my drug listed and fast. I know my condition is not glamorous and news worthy however I also have the right to affordable treatment too.