

**From:**  
**To:** [Community Affairs Committee \(SEN\)](#)  
**Subject:** Therapeutic Goods Amendment (2016 Measures No. 1) Bill 2016  
**Date:** Thursday, 2 March 2017 1:12:08 PM

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Consumer submission regarding: Therapeutic Goods Amendment (2016 Measures No. 1) Bill 2016

MPA is an independent, not for profit organisation dedicated to supporting and representing those affected by melanoma. Our vision is to reduce the impact of melanoma on all Australians. We provide counselling services and comprehensive patient information, conduct patient education forums and support groups nationally. As the largest melanoma advocacy organisation we represent Australians affected by the disease on important issues including treatment costs, reimbursement and patient care.

MPA actively engages with members of the community who have been affected by melanoma and as such we are well positioned to comment on the matter of access to drugs and the value of such access.

Australian patients can experience significant delays in accessing innovative cancer medicines compared to patients in other parts of the world and these delays can result in significant health and financial burdens. Through the MPA patient network we are aware of melanoma patients and their families that have contemplated selling their family homes, accessing superannuation and hosting fundraising events in order to fund their own treatment costs. Others have travelled overseas to receive treatment at significant expense and personal cost.

Patient access to the best evidence based treatments available is critical, particularly for those with cancer. Breakthrough treatments for melanoma have made an extraordinary difference to so many people affected by melanoma. MPA applauds the Government's decision to address issues of access to potentially life saving treatments. As consumers or those affected by cancer, we simply want the best medicine at the earliest possible opportunity.

MPA maintains that patients deserve affordable and equitable access to the best evidence based treatment available, providing them with the hope of improved survival and confidence that the best care possible is available to them here in Australia.

Yours Faithfully,

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