

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 13 & 15 February 2013

Question: E13-215

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: Medicine and Device Alerts/Communication

Type of Question: Hansard Page 30, 13 February 2013

Senator: Senator Xenophon

Question:

Are there any other strategies in the pipeline? (previous discussion referred to the Database of Adverse Event Notifications, the education and communication strategy and alerts on the website and provided to media).

Answer:

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has access to a large and diverse range of stakeholders. The TGA's major stakeholders include consumers, health professionals, industry, other government and regulatory bodies, and trade and mainstream media. To increase public awareness of its regulatory processes, the TGA is placing greater emphasis on educating and communicating with consumers, as well as developing clearer communications with healthcare professionals and the regulated industry, and further developing links and interactions with other government and regulatory bodies.

The TGA has recently published on its website, the TGA external communication and education framework (<http://www.tga.gov.au/pdf/tga-communication-framework-1315.pdf>), which outlines the TGA's overarching communication and education priorities: communicating and educating on the role of the TGA; and communicating the benefits versus risk approach to regulating therapeutic goods. The framework also provides a list of 31 projects that will be subject to individual communication strategies during the 2013-2015 period. This list includes subjects such as safety issues, adverse reactions and recalls; and consumers, health professionals and industry will each be targeted.

The TGA is continuing with the implementation of the TGA reforms: A blueprint for TGA's future (<http://www.tga.gov.au/about/tga-reforms-blueprint.htm>), which contains recommendations for communicating about safety issues in relation to medicines and medical devices.