Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000225

OUTCOME: 4 - Individual Health Benefits

Topic: Biosimilar Drugs

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Griff, Stirling

Question:

a) What percentage market share in their category do they have?
b) How does this compare with market share for generic drugs in general?

Answer:

As the introduction of biosimilar medicines to Australia has occured relatively recently there are few biosimilar medicines subsidised on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). It is therefore possible to extract data for the biological medicines with biosimilar brands listed on the PBS, and that data is presented below.

Biological Medicine	Biosimilar Brand Market Share (PBS/RPBS) [% of total PBS/RPBS scripts for the biological medicine*]
FILGRASTIM (first biosimilar April 2011)	61%
INFLIXIMAB (first biosimilar Dec 15)	4%
FOLLITROPIN ALFA (first biosimilar Aug 16)	5%
EPOETIN**	30%

*Based on number of PBS/RPBS scripts supplied 1 July 2016 to 31 December 2016 (according to date of supply, and includes under co-payment scripts). Source: PBS data maintained by Department of Health and sourced from Department of Human Services (Medicare).

** Epoetin is a special case because its biosimilar brand was approved under a different biological medicine name in Australia (epoetin lambda) to the reference biological medicine (epoetin alfa). This occurred in December 2010, at a time when the approach to naming and regulatory approvals for biosimilar medicines was developing both in Australia and around the world. For other biological medicines the biosimilar medicine brands have the same biological medicine name as the reference brand.

Market share varies widely depending on a range of factors, including overall population size for the drug, time since generic or biosimilar listing, the number of competing brands, speed to market for each brand, price setting and other marketing strategies.

In contrast to biological medicines, there are a substantial number of non-biological medicines with generic brands that are subsidised on the PBS. As at 1 February 2017 there were 318 medicines on the F2 formulary of the PBS (multi-branded / genericised medicines).

Data for the market share for a sample of two medicines with generic brands is provided below. These medicines have been chosen as they have had generic competition for a similar period of time as some of the biosimilar brands.

Medicine	**Generic Brand Market Share [% of total scripts for the medicine*]**
ZOLEDRONIC ACID (first generic Dec 15)	43%
ATOMOXETINE (first generic Aug 16)	5%

*Based on number of PBS/RPBS scripts supplied 1 July 2016 to 31 December 2016 (according to date of supply, and includes under co-payment scripts). Source: PBS data maintained by Department of Health and sourced from Department of Human Services (Medicare).