

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000226

OUTCOME: 4 - Individual Health Benefits

Topic: Biosimilar Drugs

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Griff, Stirling

Question:

Does the department have any strategy to increase use of biosimilar drugs? If so, please outline this.

Answer:

In May 2015 the Government announced the Biosimilar Awareness Initiative, under which a number of communications products for both healthcare professionals and consumers are under development. These products will improve awareness of, and confidence in, the use of biosimilar medicines.

In addition, a five year Strategic Agreement between the Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association (GBMA) and the Government was signed on 24 May 2015. It includes a requirement to establish the Generic Medicines Working Group (GMWG) to progress discussion between the Government and GBMA on policy reforms to support the sustainability of the sector.

The GMWG and its sub-groups have met 19 times since establishment in May 2015. The GMWG is progressing work under four policy priorities, which include driving uptake of generic and biosimilar medicines, and biosimilars policy, along with pricing policy, supply and viability, and transparency of PBS processes.