

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO**

**Budget Estimates 2013-14, 5/6 & 7 June 2013**

**Question: E13-001**

**OUTCOME:** 2 – Access to Pharmaceutical Services

**Topic:** Stroke Prevention Medicines

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Xenophon

**Question:**

A recently published study of strokes in Western Adelaide by leading researchers from Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Royal Adelaide, University of Adelaide, and Flinders University has highlighted that atrial fibrillation accounted for over 35% of all strokes, of which 85% were inadequately treated with stroke prevention medicines.

- a) Can the Department indicate when the new oral anticoagulants will be listed?
- b) Can the department explain why the new oral anti-coagulants have not been listed, given that over a year has passed since a review demonstrated around 40-60% of patients are untreated and at high risk of stroke? And over two years of since positive recommendation from its PBAC have passed?
- c) Can the Minister outline why the new oral anticoagulants have to be considered yet again by Cabinet when one of these medicines, Pradaxa, waited 5 months for cabinet consideration, then faced a review and is still not listed almost two years after this?
- d) Can the Minister rule out conducting any more reviews like its Review of Anticoagulation Therapies in Atrial Fibrillation for any new medicines recommended for listing on the PBS by the PBAC but not yet listed?
- e) Is the Government not satisfied with the independent advice of its advisory committee, the PBAC?

**Answer:**

a) to e)

On 1 August 2013 rivaroxaban (Xarelto®) was listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, with dabigatran (Pradaxa®) and apixaban (Eliquis®) listed on 1 September 2013.