

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-027

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

Written Question on Notice

Senator Siewert asked:

Apart from the publication of CMIs, PIs and AUSPARS on its website, what is the TGA doing to increase public transparency and consumer confidence?

Answer:

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has commenced a 3 year program of modernisation of its regulatory operations. One of the objectives of this modernisation program is to ensure communication of regulatory decisions with clarity and context for all stakeholder groups, and particularly consumers.

Timely access by consumers to information about TGA processes and decision making will be improved by a major redevelopment of the TGA website which is due for completion by mid 2011. It will give consumers easier access to decisions and their rationale, as well as clarity on the processes which underpin the TGA's regulatory functions. The TGA is reviewing all its processes so that it can respond effectively to the Australian Government's increased transparency agenda and to the changes to the Freedom of Information legislation.

On 2 November, the TGA released a consultation paper on reforms to the medical device regulatory framework that proposes publication of greater information about medical device use and decisions made by the TGA about medical devices. The TGA has also released a consultation paper on advertising reforms which proposes improvements to the transparency of regulatory decision making relating to advertising of therapeutic goods.

The Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing, the Hon Catherine King MP has announced that an independent panel will review the transparency of regulatory processes within the TGA to suggest ways of enhancing public transparency and consumer confidence.