

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 19 October 2011

Question: E11-351

OUTCOME 2: Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: PHARMACEUTICALS AND PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

If medicines are recommended for listing on the PBS by the expert PBAC because they are safe and cost-effective, what are the implications for patients if the government further delays access to these treatments?

Answer:

The Government remains committed to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Medicines Australia, as evidenced by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) listings, in 2011, of the high cost drugs romiplostim (Nplate<sup>®</sup>, for the treatment of rare blood disorders), levodopa with carbidopa (Duodopa<sup>®</sup>, for the treatment of advanced Parkinson disease), fingolimod (Gilenya<sup>®</sup>, for the treatment of multiple sclerosis) and rituximab (Mabthera<sup>®</sup>, for the treatment of chronic leukaemia).

These PBS listings all met the requirements of the MoU, where the Government committed to use its best endeavours to implement a maximum time frame of six months from the close of the pricing agreement to consideration and decision by Cabinet for all high cost drugs.