

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 19 October 2011

Question: E11-354

OUTCOME 2: Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: PHARMACEUTICALS AND PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

- a) What is the average currently, what was the average in 2009/10 and 2008/9?
- b) In the last three years, what is the longest time a medicine has had to wait for PBS listing post-PBAC recommendation?
- c) What was the reason for the delay?

Answer:

In relation to medicines estimated to cost more than \$10 million in any of the first four years of listing, the following information is provided.

- a) In 2011, the average length of time from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) recommendation to high cost medicines being listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) was 11.8 months.

In 2009-10, the average length of time from the PBAC recommendation to high cost medicines being listed on the PBS was 12 months.

In 2008-09, the average length of time from the PBAC recommendation to high cost medicines being listed on the PBS was 9.7 months.

For the previous five years, from 2003-04, the average length of time from PBAC recommendation to high cost drugs being listed on the PBS varied from 7.1 to 12.4 months.

- b) The longest time (in the last three years) a medicine has had to wait for PBS listing post-PBAC recommendation was azacitidine (Vidaza<sup>®</sup>), which took 17 months.

This compares with the period 2003-2007, where the longest time medicines had to wait for PBS listing post-PBAC recommendation was pioglitazone (Actos<sup>®</sup>) at 26 months and an extension to the listing of etanercept (Enbrel<sup>®</sup>) at 25 months.

- c) At the time, the timeframe for consideration of high cost medicines, including azacitidine, was affected by the Federal Election in August 2010. Additionally, other steps generally need to be taken before a listing is achieved, such as pricing negotiations with the product's sponsor, finalisation of the conditions for listing, quality and availability checks and consideration by the Cabinet.