

Access to Medicines Working Group

Communique

12 July 2021

The Access to Medicines Working Group (AMWG) met via videoconference on 12 July 2021. Attendees included representatives from Medicines Australia, the pharmaceutical industry and the Department of Health.

Updates were provided on each of the AMWG subgroups for members' consideration. In an update on the joint AMWG and Generic Medicines Working Group Biosimilar Policy Subgroup, members noted that since the last AMWG meeting in October 2020, the biosimilar market share continues to steadily increase.

The AMWG noted that the Streamlined Pathways Subgroup (SPS) is continuing to monitor implementation of Stage 2 PBS process improvements, which have been in place for six months. Members agreed to seek Joint Oversight Committee (JOC) endorsement for 12 Stage 2 metrics proposed by the SPS for publication. The AMWG agreed that the SPS will continue to explore additional Stage 2 metrics, including qualitative metrics and will report back to the AMWG in early 2022. The first Stage 2 metrics report will be published in late 2022 to allow 12 months of Stage 2 implementation. For Stage 1 metrics, the next annual report is expected to be published around September 2021 following out-of-session endorsement by the JOC.

Through updates on the Transparency and Efficiencies Subgroup, members noted that the 2021-22 Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) is available on the PBS website. The CRIS addresses consultation feedback received in April 2021. As outlined in the CRIS, an independent review of the PBS cost model is expected to occur after January 2022. The scope of the review will be shared with AMWG at the next meeting. The review is intended to ensure that fees reflect the most efficient costs for providing government services and outcomes of this review will be provided through the CRIS.

The AMWG members will reconvene at the next meeting which is expected to be held in November 2021.