



NEWS RELEASE

Sharon Bird MP
Federal Member for Cunningham

Public voice on PBS listings

From today consumers will be able to comment on medicines being considered for listing on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), Federal Member for Cunningham, Sharon Bird, said today.

Under this new measure, Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) meeting agendas will be publicly available six weeks before each meeting is held, giving individuals and organisations two weeks to complete an online form to explain how they, their family or carers would benefit from the PBS listing of a medicine.

“Comments will be examined by PBAC and the relevant pharmaceutical company, which has applied for Government subsidisation of the medicine(s) on the PBS”, Ms Bird said.

Currently PBAC, an expert advisory body, made up of health professionals and consumer representatives meet in March, July and November each year to consider applications from pharmaceutical companies seeking PBS listing of medicines.

“This new initiative allows consumers to have a direct say the decision making process by PBAC on whether medicines benefit them.

“The Commonwealth has developed this new initiative in consultation with Medicines Australia, Consumer’s Health Forum of Australia and Generic Medicines Industry Association”, Ms Bird said.

To be considered for PBS listing, a medicine(s) must have marketing approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) indicating it is safe and effective in the treatment of a particular condition. A medicine may be recommended for PBS listing by the PBAC after it meets the criteria of medical effectiveness and value for money.

“Over 3,000 medicines are subsidised by the Government’s PBS”, Ms Bird said.

24 September 2008

Background

The next meeting of PBAC will be held from 5-7 November 2008. Between 24 September and 8 October 2008, interested individuals or organisations can access the next PBAC meeting agenda and comment form on the medicines seeking approval for listing on the PBS:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/PBS+Publications+and+Forms-1>