

ALLG and HSANZ Welcome the House of Representatives' Standing Committee Report tabled in Parliament 25 November 2021

Overview:

The ALLG and HSANZ welcomes the Report tabled in Parliament 25/11/21 on *'The New Frontier - Delivering better health for all Australians: Inquiry into approval processes for new drugs and novel medical technologies in Australia'*, by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport.

Medical innovation has grown exponentially in recent years. The approval processes for new medicines are very complex, and this report discusses different ways to streamline them to provide better and faster patient access to treatments; without compromising on patient safety, efficacy or cost effectiveness.

The Committee's Report details 31 recommendations which aim to help government improve and reform the regulatory and reimbursement system; and helps pave the way for the improvements needed to provide Australians with the best possible health care now and into the future.

One of the many challenges facing the existing system is the trend towards delivering precision medicine to patients that offers great hope for treating a broad spectrum of conditions and diseases, including patients with rare diseases. However, these developments along with other emerging medical innovations were not envisaged when the current regulatory and reimbursement system was designed and legislated.

The ALLG supports a more flexible system to provide for timely access to the latest medicines, and for government to facilitate that outcome through innovative new ways of operating systems and processes. Our submission to the Health Committee's 'Inquiry into approval processes for new drugs and novel medical technologies in Australia' was acknowledged on page 310 of the tabled Report: [10.132] Ms Delaine Smith, CEO, Australasian Leukaemia and Lymphoma Group encouraged the Government to establish a new **pathway that would include Government support for research and data collection:**

For therapies and technologies that have insufficient evidence to support reimbursement in the Australian market, enable a pathway whereby the PBAC or MSAC could commission the research on that new agent only, in order to collect and support the reimbursement data.

The ALLG endorses the Report's 31 recommendations, particularly:

- To streamline the system and ensure Australia is an even more attractive location for clinical trials. These include the immediate harmonisation of ethics and governance approvals into one online platform and the establishment of a national clinical trials register.
- To support stronger and more collaborative R&D of new medicines.
- To streamline the approval processes for new medicines - *this will help patients with blood cancer to have better and faster access to treatments; some of which are currently only available overseas.*
- To create changes that encourage companies to enter the Australian market with their products and technologies; particularly for orphan drugs and drugs for rare diseases that are currently only available overseas.

- To create an annually capped fund with clear and transparent eligibility rules to provide funding for applications by patients, clinicians and non-profits, where there is no realistic prospect of a company serving as a sponsor.
- To create a Centre for Precision Medicine and Rare Disease within the Department of Health, to provide advice on research priorities, education and training for clinicians and patients, and the development of a comprehensive horizon scanning unit for new medicines and novel medical technologies.

The ALLG and HSANZ shares the Committee's views in that: *"It is our hope that many of the recommendations in this report can be implemented in the short-term and not await the outcome of these further reviews"*.

As the Australasian professional and research societies, we are committed to advancing research in blood cancer, and well placed to continue efforts to further advance the Report's recommendations to help ensure Australia remains a top-tier country for clinical trials and research into blood cancer.

Additionally, we support the recommendations that our country not only develops our own research capacity but, more importantly, ensures patients have early access to life changing drugs and technologies.

These recommendations will help ensure Australians benefit by being at the forefront of innovation through clinical trials and that we can provide better options and hope for patients with blood cancer, with faster access to new treatments.

About HSANZ

The Haematology Society of Australia & New Zealand (HSANZ) aims to inform members of the most recent developments in haematology, and to advance knowledge and inspire continued professional development in this exciting discipline. HSANZ has 494 clinician members and 157 haematology advanced trainee members.

For more information on the HSANZ: www.hsanz.org.au

About the ALLG

The Australasian Leukaemia and Lymphoma Group (ALLG) is a not-for-profit clinical trial organisation that sponsors local investigator initiated clinical trials.

The ALLG membership of approximately 444 clinicians is made up of almost all of the Haematologists treating Leukaemia and Lymphoma across Australia and New Zealand.

The ALLG plans, designs, conducts, monitors and publishes investigator initiated clinical trials.

For more information on the ALLG please visit our website www.allg.org.au