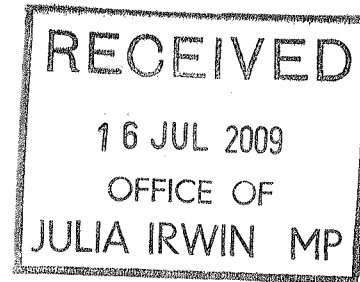




THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP
MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AGEING



Mrs Julia Irwin MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Mrs Irwin

Julia

Thank you for your letter of 11 June 2009 regarding a petition recently submitted to your Committee about the availability of AVASTIN[®] (bevacizumab) through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) for the treatment of cancer.

I am pleased to inform you that from 1 July 2009, AVASTIN was listed in the *Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits* for the treatment of colorectal cancer (also known as bowel cancer). Initial use of PBS-subsidised AVASTIN will be restricted to treatment, in combination with first-line chemotherapy, of patients with previously untreated metastatic colorectal cancer with a World Health Organization (WHO) performance status of 0 or 1. Ongoing use of PBS-subsidised AVASTIN will be restricted to treatment, in combination with first-line chemotherapy, of patients with metastatic colorectal cancer who have previously been issued with an authority prescription for bevacizumab, who do not have progressive disease and who remain on first-line chemotherapy.

Further information about the PBS listing of AVASTIN is available on my Department's website at www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr09-nr-nr054.htm Details of the restrictions pertaining to the PBS listing of AVASTIN are available at www.pbs.gov.au

I trust that the above information is of use.

Yours sincerely

NICOLA ROXON

- 6 JUL 2009
6002 701 9 -