

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2010-11, 23 February 2011

Question: E11-013

OUTCOME 2: Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: ONDANSETRON ON THE PBS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Siewert asked:

- a) Why is PBS access to Ondansetron restricted to the nausea experienced during chemotherapy for malignancy?
- b) Is the Department aware that Ondansetron is prescribed for other severe conditions?

Answer:

- a) The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) makes ondansetron available, under a range of different brands, for:
 - management of nausea and vomiting associated with cytotoxic chemotherapy being used to treat malignancy which occurs within 48 hours of chemotherapy administration; and
 - management of nausea and vomiting associated with radiotherapy being used to treat malignancy.

Medicines are listed on the PBS on the advice of the independent, expert advisory body known as the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC), comprised of doctors, other health professionals and a consumer representative.

No submissions have been made to the PBAC for the PBS listing of ondansetron for other indications.

- b) Yes.