

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000090

OUTCOME: 5 - Regulation, Safety and Protection

Topic: Supply of Bexsero

Type of Question: Hansard Page 138, 1 March 2017

Senator: Singh, Lisa

Question:

Senator SINGH: 27 October last year. Why did the minister tell parents via the media that he expected the shortage to be resolved 'soon'? 'Soon', to me, is not July.

Mr Bowles: That is a question for the minister.

Senator Nash: I would have to take that on notice.

Answer:

The current (Quarter 1, 2017) supply shortage of Bexsero was formally notified by GSK to the TGA on 2 November 2016 with GSK expecting the shortage at that time to be resolved by 31 January.

Subsequently on 24 January 2017 GSK updated the shortage stating that the shortage was until 31 July 2017. Until 24 January 2017 the shortage was expected to resolve by 31 January 2017.

GSK on 20 February 2017, in a press release, stated that they were increasing supply by 'five times last year's volumes' but that there would still be periods where demand exceeded supply. On 9 March 2017 a further GSK press release stated:

GSK confirms that another delivery of Bexsero has been released into the private market.

Robust supply of Bexsero for the Australian private market is planned for 2017 with five times the volume of vaccine expected to be delivered into the country compared to 2016.

Demand remains high and it is possible that as we release deliveries of Bexsero into the market, supply may be depleted quickly to fill back orders and waiting lists.

As demand continues to exceed supply, intermittent stock outs may occur as deliveries come in and are depleted before the next delivery arrives. This may continue until supply and demand reach a more stable state which is estimated midyear.