

Update from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee December 2025

Reflecting on the 2025 PBAC year

As we look back on the past year, the PBAC has noted several highlights illustrating the volume and complexity of matters that come before the Committee for advice and consideration.

The numbers alone tell a story: 291 items were dealt with across the 6 scheduled PBAC meetings, and the additional PBAC meeting held in May 2025. 146 of these items were submission-based and received from companies. The remaining 145 items covered a wide range of matters across many aspects of the PBS listings, including restriction reviews, changes to medicine programs, and formal requests received from clinical and community stakeholders. PBAC Agendas do not only include consideration of new submissions, but also items grappling with changes in clinical context, new and emerging treatment paradigms, as well as regular requests focused on reviewing and updating listings for supporting optimal clinical management across Australia. The importance of the work to the Australian communities was evidenced by the 3,736 submissions from clinicians, patients and carers received through the public consultation process via the [Office of Health Technology Assessment consultation hub](#).

Stakeholders

This volume of work requires efforts across many Departmental teams, as well as being supported by significant engagement with stakeholders including sponsors, health profession and clinical groups, consumer and patient organisations, and individuals across communities of patients and relevant clinicians.

Beyond the formal PBAC meetings, we have held 43 post PBAC meetings with sponsors of submissions and participated in a further 183 stakeholder meetings across 2025. These meetings were important as opportunities to listen, to learn, and to shape outcomes that matter for patients and the broader community as efficiently as possible and often carried through to confirmation and finalised recommendations between formal meetings and often “out of session” if possible.

Outcomes of note

1. Finalising the comprehensive review of GLP-1 obesity medicines, undertaken throughout the year at the request of the Minister, with comprehensive support of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. This work was a significant undertaking to ensure the input from consumer networks and a range of clinical providers were received. The PBAC has been determined to best reflect complex challenges across several population groups and communities dealing with the burden of obesity as well as evidence based clinical management challenges in various settings. At the final meeting for 2025 the Committee finalised this review and provided findings and PBAC advice for response to Government.
2. The PBAC is established as an Independent Statutory Committee and given functions under legislation made by the Australian Parliament. Its membership includes clinicians, health economists and consumer representatives. Many members undertake their roles on the PBAC on top of their other roles delivering clinical care and advice across many Australian

communities, assessing medicines and interpreting evidence. For every medicine or therapy that it considers, the PBAC is required to assess how effective it is, and how safe it will be compared to current clinical interventions in Australia, and what is the value of the potential new intervention for Australian patients and ensuring that each submission gets the best possible consideration. 2025 was a year where the Department and PBAC engaged with sponsors to try and find further solutions to avoid resubmission “churn” and focus on more efficient ways to agree on final recommendations to Government. An increasing proportion of positive recommendations over the recent meetings indicates that these interactions are bringing meaningful improvements overall, especially in terms of time to access for Australian patients.

3. Additionally, this year saw the finalisation of a major project considering broader indications for PDL-1 inhibitors to allow access to these therapies for many more patients not able to access these medicines. PBAC recommended expanding the listing of nivolumab (Opdivo®) and ipilimumab (Yervoy®) on the PBS in September 2025, making these important treatments available to a wider range of Australians living with advanced and metastatic cancers. The Committee recommendations to the Minister were a strong example of the commitment of all stakeholders and the sponsor in the preparatory efforts to improving access to medicines whilst also considering implementation aspects for patients and clinicians once these restriction changes would take effect. PBAC is hopeful this strategic approach to the broader listings of these medicines provides an example for potential priority considerations in the future.

As we celebrate these milestones, we also recognise the collective efforts, expertise, and passion that made them possible. We are looking forward to 2026 and continuing the work of the PBAC with the Department, Government and all our stakeholders, on behalf of all Australians.

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