

Biosimilars Awareness Initiative Reference Group Communiqué

The first meeting of the Biosimilars Awareness Initiative Reference Group was held in Canberra on 7 April 2016.

Attendees

The Chair of the meeting was Dr Anthony Hobbs. Attendees included: representatives from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee; Arthritis Australia; Australian Rheumatology Association; Consumers' Health Forum; Crohn's and Colitis Australia; Gastroenterological Society of Australia; Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association; Medicines Australia; NPS MedicineWise; Pharmaceutical Society of Australia; Royal Australasian College of Physicians; and The Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

Representatives of the Department of Health were also in attendance.

Purpose

The purpose of the meeting was to engage key representative groups in the development of effective and targeted communications to support the Biosimilars Awareness Initiative, to provide information on their role as members of the Reference Group, and to discuss the priorities of the Initiative.

Outcomes

The Reference Group formally endorsed the Terms of Reference.

It was agreed that the Reference Group would provide advice and support to the Steering Committee on the identification and engagement of relevant target groups in order to raise awareness of biosimilars.

Members committed to ensuring that messages coming from the Initiative are consistent and targeted.

Members agreed that the short- to medium-term priorities of the Initiative are:

- engagement with a broad range of stakeholders, including groups who are not currently members of the Reference Group;
- to conduct Market Research to support the Initiative;
- to develop, test and disseminate communication and education materials to support understanding and use of biological and biosimilar medicines;
- to gather information on international policies and experience related to the uptake of biosimilars; and
- to establish current data collection capabilities and requirements.

Next Meeting of the Reference Group will be in May 2016.