

Statement from Janssen ANZ MD Biljana Naumovic in response to 5-year Strategic Agreement

The Health Minister today announced the five-year strategic agreement with Medicines Australia. This agreement outlines how the Government will provide affordable access to medicines for all Australians.

At the core of this agreement is a commitment from the Minister to independently review the way that new medicines are assessed, approved and reimbursed. This is a long overdue opportunity for the millions of Australian patients who rely on the taxpayer funded Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme for access to life saving and life changing medicines.

Currently, Australian patients face much longer delays for new medicines than many other wealthy nations. The average time between approving the use of an innovative, new medicine and listing that medicine on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme is nearly 400 days. This is more than twice the average time it takes in other OECD nations and almost four times as long as it takes in countries like Japan and Germany.

That is why it is critical this independent review commences as soon as possible, is completed within a six-month timeframe and its recommendations implemented.

Australian patients have waited too long at the back of the queue.

As we have seen throughout this global pandemic, having early access to new medicines is not only a social imperative, but an economic one. This is a once in a generation opportunity for the Health Minister to leave a lasting legacy and to lead the world in providing timely access to life saving treatments. Patients across the country will be watching closely.

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