



30 September 2013

Medicines Australia
Level 1, 16 Napier Close
Deakin, ACT, 2600
Oncology.Taskforce@medicinesaustralia.com.au

To Oncology Industry Taskforce,

Comment on *Access to Cancer Medicines in Australia* report

Sanofi is one of the fifteen member companies of the Oncology Industry Taskforce (OIT), a Taskforce which came together in late 2012 in response to the increasing concerns being expressed by various stakeholders, including clinicians and patients, about timely and equitable access to the newer cancer medicines in Australia. This Taskforce, endorsed by Medicines Australia, commissioned Deloitte Access Economics to produce a report about the impacts of cancer on the Australian community and the medicines used to treat cancer in Australia. The *Access to Cancer Medicines in Australia Report* was launched at the annual meeting of The Medicinal Oncology Group of Australia (MOGA) in July 2013.

The Report contained a comprehensive assessment of the current environment through consultation across a broad range of stakeholders including health consumer organisations, clinicians, researchers, government and payers, as well as the pharmaceutical industry itself. The OIT hoped the Report would stimulate community discussion about the value of new cancer medicines, and how to deliver equitable and timely access to cancer medicines which will ultimately improve health benefits for cancer sufferers, their carers' and families.

As a member of the OIT, Sanofi notes that it does not intend to re-address the content and conclusions of the Report. Rather, the purpose of this submission is to reiterate Sanofi's full support of the Report, as well as to provide some overall comments.


As noted in the Report, fortunately Australia has invested heavily in cancer care since first recognising cancer as a National Health Priority Area in 1996, including making many cancer drugs available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Schedule (PBS). However, Sanofi, like its peers, is concerned that Australia's position as a world leader in cancer control is now under threat because patients are unable to access some of the newer oncology medicines via the taxpayer-funded PBS. Patients have to pay for these drugs themselves, which many cannot afford; or companies provide the drugs either free of charge via compassionate access schemes (which may continue for years whilst the drug resubmits to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC)) or via a subsidised program. Indeed, Sanofi along with many companies have provided oncology drugs via one type of scheme or another, with this access mostly provided free of charge (85.2%), as noted in the Report (Section 4.7).

Even for those cancer drugs currently PBS-listed, many of them experienced significant delays in gaining this status, delays that negatively impacted patients. Sanofi holds major concerns that not only are these delays increasingly common, but some companies have recently decided not to resubmit to PBAC after multiple rejections for their new drug. Sanofi concurs that there are a number of potential reasons for these delays, including misalignment between the rapid advances in cancer therapy and the more dated requirements of reimbursement processes. Sanofi shares the industry-wide concerns about the difficulties many Australian cancer patients are currently facing in getting timely, affordable and equitable access to the newer cancer drugs that are already available to patients in some other countries with comparable economic climates, such as the United Kingdom, Europe and America. Sanofi is also concerned that the current approach to reimbursement for innovative medicines is unsustainable and that companies may stop bringing new cancer therapies to market in Australia, as has started happening.

Sanofi believes the Report clearly articulates the challenges faced by companies like us who continue to develop innovative drugs to treat therapeutic areas with an unmet clinical need, such as oncology. Sanofi has a strong oncology heritage and remains committed to this therapeutic area. Whilst acknowledging that some of the new drugs are high cost, Sanofi believes a community-wide debate is imperative to assess the value of these medicines.

In conclusion, we thank Medicines Australia for the opportunity to provide comment on the Access to Cancer Medicines in Australia Report and reiterate our support of the Report's content and conclusions. We sincerely hope that the Report provides the impetus for a collaborative community debate involving all the stakeholders, a debate that will identify needs and develop solutions which will enable equitable access to new medicines for all Australian cancer patients in need.

Yours sincerely,



Laurence McAllister
Managing Director, Australia & New Zealand¹

About Sanofi

Sanofi, an integrated global healthcare leader, discovers, develops and distributes therapeutic solutions focused on patients' needs. Sanofi has core strengths in the field of healthcare with seven growth platforms: diabetes solutions, human vaccines, innovative drugs, consumer healthcare, emerging markets, animal health and the new Genzyme. Sanofi is listed in Paris (EURONEXT: SAN) and in New York (NYSE: SNY).

About Sanofi Oncology

Based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA and Vitry, France, Sanofi Oncology is dedicated to translating science into effective therapeutics that address unmet medical needs for cancer and organ transplant patients. Starting with a deep understanding of the disease and the patient, Sanofi Oncology employs innovative approaches to drug discovery and clinical development, with the ultimate goal of bringing the right medicines to the right patients to help them live healthier and longer lives. We believe in the value of partnerships that combine our internal scientific expertise with that of industry and academic experts. Our portfolio includes 11 marketed products and more than 15 investigational compounds in clinical development, including small molecules and biological agents.