



**The Hon Mark Butler MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care**

Elizabeth de Somer
Chief Executive Officer
Medicines Australia
17 Denison Street
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Dear Ms de Somer *Liz*

Thank you for your letter of 31 March outlining the policy priorities of Medicines Australia and its members for the 2025 federal election. I am pleased to respond on behalf of the ALP.

Let me begin by reiterating the ALP's support for the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. Created by the ALP, the PBS is the world's second oldest health financing program after the NHS in the United Kingdom, and it has delivered Australian patients access to the world's best medicines at affordable prices. The ALP will always defend the PBS in the face of vested interests and overseas attacks.

I want to also make it clear that the ALP will be steadfast in its protection of Australia's pharmaceutical manufacturing industry from unfair restrictions on its ability to export.

Deliver on commitments in Strategic Agreement

The ALP remains committed to delivering all of the commitments made under the existing Strategic Agreement.

Commitment to HTA reform

I have said publicly on several occasions that progress on the health technology assessment policy and methods review (HTA review) is a high priority for the Government and an implementation advisory group (IAG) was appointed in November 2024 to assist the Government response to the review. I appreciate your contribution to the review as a member of the expert panel and the commitment that industry has again made (via yourself and Anne Harris) as members of the IAG.

As you know, in February 2025, I wrote to IAG Chair Professor Andrew Wilson to ask that the IAG prioritise the development of its advice on the implementation of recommendations from the HTA Review report relating to:

1. More equitable access for patients
2. Process changes to support more streamlined HTA
3. Improved stakeholder engagement in HTA

In the letter to Prof Wilson, I said:

I also ask the IAG consider the expected benefits, responsibilities for and cost implications of reform implementation in its advice to Government. This advice should make a clear case for why additional Commonwealth funding is needed and provide a strong evidence base for the merits of implementing relevant reforms. This should include consideration of the expected benefits for patients and better service provision for sponsors.

PBS co-payment reduction

The ALP is committed to finding a workable solution between industry and Government to this issue.

Consultation with Medicines Australia

The ALP appreciates the importance of regular and meaningful consultation between Government and industry on issues. I anticipate that many of these issues will be further explored and potentially resolved via the IAG process. Should they not be resolved, a returned ALP government commits to working constructively with you to ensure that industry has greater awareness of decision making with a potential impact on its operations.

Thank you for writing to me on these matters.

Yours sincerely



Mark Butler

23/04/2025