

May 22, 2016

Peak body for pharmacists responds to Labor's PBS election policy

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) National President Joe Demarte said:

"Pharmacists welcome Federal Labor's election policy announcement today to not increase PBS co-payments above CPI or change safety net thresholds.

"This policy will provide a boost to patient health as evidence shows when the price of medicines increases, consumers have to choose between medications and other household expenses.

"We know that this not only leads to poor consumer health outcomes but also increased health system costs over the longer term as consumer financial access to medicines is reduced.

"Access to pharmacist services may also be compromised if the Federal Government continually seeks to find savings in the PBS. As a result, PSA has sought clarification over Health Minister Sussan Ley's previous statements that the Government does not intend to proceed with the co-payment and safety net threshold increases, despite their presence in the forward estimates.

"PSA supports the long-term sustainability of the PBS and as investment in medicine is an important cost-saving measure, which helps to save lives by reducing the impact of chronic disease for Australians every day.

"A long-term plan for financial sustainability of the PBS must also include investment in evidence-based pharmacist services to ensure the impact of medicine is maximised and health outcomes are achieved."

"Affordable medicines is one piece of the puzzle, but we need to ensure optimal use of that medicine through evidence-based pharmacist care."

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