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Minister for Health and Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

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New advisory structure for medicines policy

The Australian Government announced today arrangements for the new advisory structure to support Australia's National Medicines Policy.

The new arrangements better reflect the current medicines policy environment, and will make an important contribution to better health for Australians.

Since 1999, the National Medicines Policy has provided a framework for medication access, safety and quality in Australia.

The new structure better allows National Medicines Policy partners, including individual experts, related organisations and committees, Government representatives and stakeholder groups to provide input into the principles, policy and practice of the policy.

The new three-tiered structure comprises:

- a National Medicines Policy Executive
- a National Medicines Policy Committee
- an annual National Medicines Policy Partnerships Forum.

Professor Andrew McLachlan, Professor of Pharmacy (Aged Care) at the University of Sydney, will chair the National Medicines Policy Committee. Professor McLachlan will also provide expertise in the area of pharmacy.

Other committee members and their fields of expertise are:

- Dr Jim BATTERY - clinical practice
- Professor Patricia DUNNING - nursing
- Dr Linda SWAN - medicines manufacture and marketing
- Professor Alan BENSOUSSAN - complementary medicines
- Dr Ross MAXWELL - prescribing

- Professor Paul Rolan - pharmacology
- Professor Sally Green - epidemiology
- Ms Diane Walsh - consumer matters.

The National Medicines Policy Committee will provide advice on emerging medicines policy issues. It will also undertake, oversee or consider projects and research as requested by the executive.

The National Medicines Policy Executive will advise the Government on implementing the National Medicines Policy within the health portfolio. The members of the executive are:

- Mr David Learmonth, Deputy Secretary, Department of Health and Ageing (chair)
- Dr Janette Randall, chair of the National Prescribing Service
- Professor Lloyd Sansom, chair of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee
- Dr Rohan Hammett, national manager for the Therapeutics Goods Administration
- Mr Craig Pennifold, head of the Innovation Division, Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research
- Professor Andrew McLachlan, chair of the National Medicines Policy Committee.

The new advisory structure will commence with a meeting of the executive, expected to be held in early March. A meeting of the National Medicines Policy Partnerships Forum will follow, providing an opportunity for stakeholders to exchange information on the policy and to discuss its implementation, partnerships, challenges and opportunities.

Planning for the first Partnerships Forum will be an early priority for the committee and the executive.

Further information on the National Medicines Policy and the new advisory structure is available on the department's web site at:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/National+Medicines+Policy-1>

For all media inquiries, please contact the Minister's Office on 02 6277 7220.