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**Ms Helen Owens
Commissioner
Productivity Commission
Level 28, 35 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000**

Dear Helen

Re: Health Technology Assessment

I enclose a listing of some of the national bodies involved in Health Technology Assessment. In addition a number of other jurisdictions are also engaging in Health Technology Assessment.

There is in my view a scope for significant rationalisation of responsibilities for conducting these activities whilst maintaining and developing the network of contractors skilled in Health Technology Assessment.

The organisations listed are:

- TGA - is involved in safety and sometimes effectiveness
- PBAC – is involved in Drug Assessment
- MSAC – is involved in Devices
- Prostheses & Devices – is involved in approving major listings in the Private Health Insurance Prostheses Schedule and I understand will require health technology assessments to occur presumably through MSAC for the future. As you would have been made aware from submissions such as hip prostheses and drug eluting stents are listed on this Committee and both recent listings of these very expensive high volume items have not been subject to technology assessments prior to their listing.
- ATAGI – is involved in health technology and cost effectiveness assessments of the immunisations.

- HPACT – is involved in the Horizon Scanning Early Warning system and is now an MSAC subcommittee but has links to AHMAC.
- NBA – attempts to undertake health technology assessments in the blood sector.

In the UK this is all done by NICE. One body to undertake HTA may not be possible in Australia but some rationalisation down to say PBAC and MSAC seems desirable given the variation in standards, approaches and conclusions that these various bodies are engaged in and which causes some significant inconsistencies.

Another body that looks at safety and effectiveness but cannot come to terms with cost effectiveness in clinical matters is the NHMRC and again the role of NHMRC in relationship to these other bodies is probably worthy of exploration.

I hope this further short submission is of interest to you.

Yours sincerely

Professor Brendon Kearney AM
DIRECTOR

21 / 03 /05

BJK:MMF