



australasian society of clinical immunology and allergy

20 January 2023

Professor Andrew Wilson
Chair, Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC)
MDP 952, GPO Box 9848
Canberra, ACT 2601
Email: pbac@health.gov.au

Dear Professor Wilson,

Re: Shingrix® (Varicella Zoster Virus Recombinant Vaccine) application

This submission is made on behalf of the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA). ASCIA is the peak professional body of clinical immunology/allergy specialists in Australia and New Zealand.

We write in support of the following application which is on the March 2023 meeting agenda for consideration by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC), for Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) listing on the National Immunisation Program:

VARICELLA ZOSTER VIRUS RECOMBINANT VACCINE

Shingrix® - GlaxoSmithKline Australia Pty Ltd

Injection [1 vial] & adjuvant substance diluent [0.5 mL vial]

Clinical indication: Prevention of herpes zoster and post-herpetic neuralgia

New PBS listing: Resubmission to request a National Immunisation Program listing for the prevention of herpes zoster and post-herpetic neuralgia in:

- Adults 65 years of age with ongoing catch-up for adults over 65 years of age.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults 50 years of age with ongoing catch-up for adults over 50 years of age.

ASCIA supports this application for the following reasons:

- **Zostavax®** is currently the only Varicella Zoster virus vaccine PBS listed on the National Immunisation Program to prevent herpes zoster (shingles) and post-herpetic neuralgia. However, **Zostavax® is a live, attenuated vaccine**, which is not recommended for immunocompromised patients, including patients with immunosuppression, primary or secondary immunodeficiencies.
- **Shingrix® is a recombinant Varicella Zoster virus vaccine**, which does not contain live virus, and is therefore recommended for immunocompromised patients.
- **By having two effective vaccines (Shingrix® and Zostavax®) PBS listed** on the National Immunisation Program, this would enable a choice of vaccine in immunocompromised patients, or in patients who have had adverse reactions (e.g. anaphylaxis) to one of the vaccines.

ASCIA is the peak professional body of clinical immunology and allergy specialists in Australia and New Zealand

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We hope that the PBAC will take into account the reasons listed above, in support of the application for PBS listing of **Shingrix®** on the National Immunisation Program.

Please do not hesitate to contact us by emailing jill@allergy.org.au for further information.

Yours sincerely,

A/Prof Theresa Cole

ASCIA President

Jill Smith

ASCIA CEO

Copy: ASCIA Council