



The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care

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Professor Paul Dietze
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25 MAY 2021

Dear Professor

I refer to your correspondence of 23 April 2021 concerning the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme subsidised Take Home Naloxone (THN) pilot.

I am pleased to confirm the Australian Government will provide \$3.9 million in 2021–22 to extend the THN pilot program in Western Australia, New South Wales and South Australia until 30 June 2022. This announcement, as part of the 2021–22 Federal Budget, ensures naloxone will continue to be available for free and without a prescription to people who may experience, or witness an opioid overdose in the three pilot states.

Continuation of the THN pilot will benefit Australians in need, state and territory governments, providers of alcohol and other drug services, pharmacies and emergency departments through Australian Government funding the provision of naloxone. The additional year for the THN pilot recognises the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on pilot activities and timeframes, including the unprecedented demand placed on community pharmacies that has meant the potential reach and scope of the pilot has not been fully realised.

The additional year for the pilot also supports the three participating jurisdictions to maintain their THN pilot programs and continue to build awareness of naloxone while the pilot evaluation is completed in the second half of 2021. The multi-faceted evaluation approach is designed to capture successes and challenges of the pilot and is critical to inform decisions about a viable model for an ongoing national THN program in Australia.

There will be opportunity for future engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including the National Naloxone Reference Group and the Burnet Institute in the coming months, including consideration of the outcomes of the pilot evaluation. I am encouraged to hear of the many lives saved by this initiative and look forward to continuing to work with you to support access to naloxone for those at risk of overdose.

Thank you for writing on this matter.

Yours sincerely



Greg Hunt

cc: Professor Brendan Crabb, Director and Chief Executive Officer, Burnet Institute