

13 February 2013

Dr Suzanne Hill
Chair
Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee
GPO Box 9848
Canberra ACT 2601



Dear Dr Hill

Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) welcomes the opportunity to provide comment to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee on the submission to list vinorelbine (Navelbine®) capsules for the treatment of patients with advanced breast cancer after failure of standard prior therapy which includes an anthracycline, as a single agent or in combination.

About BCNA

BCNA is the peak national organisation for Australians personally affected by breast cancer. We empower, inform, represent and link together people whose lives have been affected by breast cancer. We work to ensure that women diagnosed with breast cancer and their families receive the very best information, treatment, care and support possible – no matter who they are or where they live.

BCNA currently represents more than 75,000 individual members and 325 Member Groups from across Australia. More than 95 per cent of our members have had a diagnosis of breast cancer, and the remaining members have had a personal experience with breast cancer through a family member or friend.

Our Submission

BCNA supports the application for the listing of vinorelbine capsules.

The addition of oral vinorelbine to the PBS will, in particular, improve access to chemotherapy for women who live in rural and remote areas of Australia. These women often incur additional expenses in having to travel for treatment, and we know anecdotally that traveling increases fatigue and stress in women with secondary breast cancer. Women also tell us they are often reluctant to leave their home and family. While we acknowledge that women being treated with oral vinorelbine will still need to be under the care of a medical oncologist for regular monitoring, if the amount of travel required can be reduced it will be of great benefit to them.

Oral vinorelbine will also give women with poor venous access a new chemotherapy option.

Thank you for considering our submission. If you have any comments or enquiries, please contact me at kwells@bcna.org.au or on 03 9805 2562.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Wells
Acting Policy Manager

A network of support for Australians affected by breast cancer

Patron: Her Excellency
Ms Quentin Bryce AC,
Governor-General of the
Commonwealth of Australia

293 Camberwell Road
Camberwell VIC 3124
ABN 16 087 937 531

Telephone: (03) 9805 2500
Freecall: 1800 500 258
Email: beacon@bcna.org.au
Website: www.bcna.org.au