Repurposing Medicines – Follow Up Consultation

In 2021 the Department of Health conducted public consultations discussions to understand barriers to repurposing medicines in Australia, focussing on identifying potential incentives to overcome barriers of repurposing of medicines. In April 2022, Cancer Council collaborated with the Clinical Oncology Society of Australia (COSA) and the Medical Oncology Society of Australia (MOGA) to provide further feedback to inform the Department's advice to Government on how it might:

o   address commercial and intellectual property issues;
o   identify the best candidates for repurposing;
o   shortlist candidates; and
o   approach and incentivise the market for repurposing a medicine.

Recognising that in the treatment of cancer, it is particularly challenging when medicines are off-patent, yet are part of usual care for patients, our submission recommended that -:

- a social licence should operate in the Australian health and medicines environment, where equitable patient access to optimal health care is put at the centre of decision making, incentivisation and other process requirements.

- the TGA would need to provide additional resourcing to enable non-traditional sponsors to provide an application for off-patent medicines, given the current repurposing application process and pharmacovigilance requirements are not feasible for them.

- clinicians already informally assist and identify medications that are routinely repurposed and patient needs must remain the driving force behind repurposing and reimbursement strategies.

- including a broad range of patient experiences and input to identify and prioritise candidates for consideration of repurposing medicines is important.

- it would be helpful to consider different criteria for on-patent and off-patent medicines, or generically available medicines. We identified examples of cancer specific priorities.

Once considered by the review team a copy of the submission will be available on the Department of Health website.