Public Health Association of Australia submission on the commercial supply of Dengvaxia, an attenuated genetically modified dengue vaccine
PHAA submission on the commercial supply of Dengvaxia, an attenuated genetically modified dengue vaccine

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Introduction

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) is recognised as the principal non-government organisation for public health in Australia working to promote the health and well-being of all Australians. It is the pre-eminent voice for the public’s health in Australia. The PHAA works to ensure that the public’s health is improved through sustained and determined efforts of the Board, the National Office, the State and Territory Branches, the Special Interest Groups and members.

The efforts of the PHAA are enhanced by our vision for a healthy Australia and by engaging with like-minded stakeholders in order to build coalitions of interest that influence public opinion, the media, political parties and governments.

Health is a human right, a vital resource for everyday life, and key factor in sustainability. Health equity and inequity do not exist in isolation from the conditions that underpin people’s health. The health status of all people is impacted by the social, cultural, political, environmental and economic determinants of health. Specific focus on these determinants is necessary to reduce the unfair and unjust effects of conditions of living that cause poor health and disease. These determinants underpin the strategic direction of the Association.

All members of the Association are committed to better health outcomes based on these principles.

Vision for a healthy population

A healthy region, a healthy nation, healthy people: living in an equitable society underpinned by a well-functioning ecosystem and a healthy environment, improving and promoting health for all.

Mission for the Public Health Association of Australia

As the leading national peak body for public health representation and advocacy, to drive better health outcomes through increased knowledge, better access and equity, evidence informed policy and effective population-based practice in public health.

Preamble

PHAA welcomes the opportunity to provide input to the consultation on the commercial supply of Dengvaxia. The reduction of social and health inequities should be an over-arching goal of national policy and recognised as a key measure of our progress as a society. The Australian Government, in collaboration with the States/Territories, should outline a comprehensive national cross-government framework on reducing health inequities. All public health activities and related government policy should be directed towards reducing social and health inequity nationally and, where possible, internationally.
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PHAA Response to the consultation

The PHAA supports immunisation as one of the highest impact and most cost-effective public health interventions available. The reduction in the incidence of vaccine preventable disease through immunisation reduces the economic and social burden of those diseases¹.

The PHAA would welcome the registration and licensing of a safe and effective vaccine against Dengue Fever in Australia. According to the World Health Organization position paper on Dengvaxia, the vaccine efficacy is moderate and should be recommended for use in countries where Dengue is endemic. Given Australia’s low incidence of Dengue, vaccine recommendations should be limited to individuals travelling to countries where Dengue is endemic.

As this is a live virus vaccine, recommendations around use in pregnant women and those with compromised immunity would need to be clarified.

Noting the current availability of Dengvaxia in 14 other countries, its potential to reduce incidence of severe re-infection, and the low risk finding of the Regulator’s risk assessment, the PHAA would support the commercial supply of Dengvaxia in Australia, pending a positive outcome from the Therapeutic Good Administration assessment.

The PHAA appreciates the opportunity to make this submission and the opportunity to comment on the commercial supply of Dengvaxia.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require additional information or have any queries in relation to this submission.

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References