



A U S T R A L I A

Giving life back

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 21 June 2011

MS AUSTRALIA WELCOMES SUBSIDY OF FIRST ORAL MS MEDICATION

The first medication for multiple sclerosis (MS) that can be taken orally will be subsidised under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) - welcome news for many Australians living with MS.

Health Minister Nicola Roxon made the announcement today that the new medication will be available from September 1.

MS Australia's Manager of Policy and Community Partnerships Alan Blackwood said that the drug's listing was a positive step for people living with MS.

"This is a landmark decision – the first medication for people with MS that be taken as a tablet," Mr Blackwood said.

"It means there's a new, affordable option for the 20,000 Australians living with the effects of MS every day.

"Medications give people the capacity to manage illnesses like MS and live their day to day lives – all the things that the rest of us take for granted like going to work, picking up the kids and participating in our communities," Mr Blackwood said.

Mr Blackwood said that the news was particularly welcome given the debate raging today about the range of medications awaiting approval by the Federal Cabinet.

Ends

Note to editors and producers: Interviews with Mr Blackwood or people living with MS can be arranged upon request

Contact:

Prue Guillaume
Public Relations Manager
MS Australia
Ph: 0450 659 811
Email: prue.guillaume@msaustralia.org.au