



Australian Government
Department of Health and Aged Care

Ref No: MC23-005854

Ms Elizabeth Hart
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Dear Ms Elizabeth Hart

Thank you for your correspondence of 12 March 2023 to the Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Mark Butler MP regarding conflict of interest processes for the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI). The Minister has asked me to reply.

ATAGI is a non-statutory advisory group that provides independent advice to the Minister for Health and Aged Care on the medical administration of vaccines available in Australia, including those available through the National Immunisation Programme (NIP), along with other vaccine related issues.

ATAGI's membership includes technical experts, immunisation nurses, a consumer representative, and GPs. The members are leaders in their respective fields and concurrently hold prominent roles across public health, medicine, and regulatory health fields. Their expertise ensures Australians can be confident that vaccines recommended by ATAGI are safe and effective.

Members can choose to participate in clinical research, conferences and industry related events but must declare their participation through the established declaration of interest process. The Department of Health and Aged Care (the department) maintains the process for declarations of interest and members are acutely aware of the need to manage their involvement in these events to prevent any potential, actual or perceived conflict.

To identify and manage conflicts, the declarations are reviewed by the ATAGI Chair, Deputy Chair, the departmental representative and the consumer representative who assess whether the declaration gives rise to potential, actual or perceived conflict and if the member should withdraw from discussion on the topic relevant to their declaration.

This process is robust and ensures ATAGI members can maintain their expertise in their respective fields, advance research into critical areas of vaccination, and advise the Minister on administration of vaccines in Australia.



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The department is currently reviewing ATAGI's probity policies and documentation to ensure it remains transparent, well-documented, defensible and represents best practice. The information on the website will be reviewed and updated once the review has been completed.

Thank you for writing on this matter

Yours sincerely

Dr Nicholas Johnson
Acting Assistant Secretary
Immunisation Branch
18 April 2023