



PBS DATA DISTRIBUTION – SOFTWARE VENDOR WORKING GROUP

MEETING NOTES – 15 JUNE 2021

DATE AND TIME	Tuesday, 15 June 2021 at 9:30AM – 10:30AM
VENUE	Microsoft Teams Call

AGENDA NO.	KEY POINTS DISCUSSED
1	<p>Agenda, Welcome and Overview (slides 2 to 5)</p> <p>The Department sought attendee’s permission to record meeting.</p> <p>Participants were welcomed, introduced to the agenda, and provided with a brief overview of the goals, current status and planned timeframes for the PBS Data Distribution project.</p> <p>It was noted that the Department is focused on ensuring that the solution is ready to move on to each stage of the project rather than seeking to hit specific deadlines, and that the transition from the current data distribution methods to the future solution will occur in consultation with the software vendor community.</p> <p>A brief recap of the last meeting (9th February 2021) was provided.</p>
2	<p>Closing Out the Alpha API (slides 7 to 10)</p> <p>The Department thanked the software vendors and organisations who have engaged in the Alpha testing thus far. There have been over 55 bugs identified through the Alpha and 3 releases of the API.</p> <p>A quick overview was provided of the changes included in the last API version. The Department confirmed that there will be one final data refresh prior to ceasing development on the Alpha, and that this should resolve the majority of known remaining bugs and issues – provided on slide 9. After this, the Alpha API will remain available to software vendors who are not participants in the Private Beta, but there will be no further development of the Alpha.</p> <p>The Department confirmed that the development priorities before releasing to the Beta stages was to ensure that the API and relational version of the PBS data was ‘enterprise standard’. This includes the implementation of rigorous security standards, API management capabilities and a useful developer portal including test harnesses.</p> <p>There were no questions or comments from participants.</p>
3	<p>Discussion: Restrictions, Notes and Cautions (see slides 12 and 13)</p> <p>The Department noted it has already received some feedback and questions on Restrictions, Notes and Cautions, as well as meeting directly with some vendors on the subject.</p>

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	<p>The Department referenced the Services Australia initiative to move to Online Authorities as an example of emerging requirements for providing more de-normalised data.</p> <p>Some of the challenges inherent in the Restrictions data were discussed, including the challenges in providing data in a granular enough format to provide data consumers with flexibility, without introducing unreasonable risks. It was suggested that there may be a period where Restrictions are provided through the API both normalised and de-normalised, and that the Department will consider sending out a few different data models for review and feedback by the software vendor working group.</p> <p>Questions and Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A participant asked whether the project was considering linking Restrictions to SNOWMED terminology, as this would provide a significant opportunity to link data across systems. The Department responded that they are aware of the benefits and this is an initiative that remains on the Departmental roadmap and may be incorporated in later stages of the Program that this project is part of. It is not however in the immediate future plans of the Data Distribution project, as it is about the method and vocabulary used by the business area when listing restrictions, whereas the data distribution project is concerned with downstream processes.
4	<p>Beta and Next Steps (see slides 15 and 16)</p> <p>The Department provided an overview of the goals of the Beta phase, noting that data validation and integrity is a key focus – the Department would like to complete the Beta stage with a high level of confidence that the data set is complete and easily consumed by software vendors.</p> <p>The rationale for holding a private beta prior to inviting all software vendors was discussed, and the Department announced it will hold an expression of interest process to provide all vendors with a chance to be involved (due 25th June 2021 to pbsdatapoint@health.gov.au).</p> <p>The Department is particularly keen to have continued involvement from vendors who have actively participated in the Alpha testing and ensuring that there is at least one 'prescribing' and one 'dispensing' software vendor.</p> <p>Planned next steps were explained to the group and it was reiterated that testing and feedback is greatly appreciated.</p> <p>Any feedback can be sent to pbsdatapoint@health.gov.au.</p>
5	<p>Other Business and Close</p> <p>Questions and Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A representative enquired whether the performance of later versions of the API is expected to be better than the Alpha. The Department confirmed that the resources allocated to the API will be increased, and the approach will be to ensure that it can scale rapidly, as the Department expects the majority of queries will be received within an hour of the data release. • A representative asked about the approach the Department was planning to take regarding the Summary of Changes (SoC), due to its importance to vendors in the data

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	<p>validation process. The Department responded that during the Beta phase vendors will receive the SoC in largely the same format and timing as they currently do, and the Department will be performing testing between the SoC version that is produced through current processes and the SoC that will be produced programmatically by the API. The new data distribution solution will see the SoC data released at the same time as all other PBS data, and the intention is that vendors become less dependent on the SoC as the overall quality, readability and reliability of the data has improved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A representative enquired as to whether the Department was considering implementing a 'hard deadline' for changes to the PBS data by the Department. It was noted that although the turnaround between the final release by the Department and the first day of the subsequent month has always been challenging, it was particularly problematic during the April data release. The Department confirmed that it understands the limitations of the turnaround timeframes and is in discussions about how to improve this. It was noted that the final release date is impacted by numerous processes and external stakeholders, including Ministerial approval dates. It was also noted that the API and relational data format being implemented by the project should alleviate some of the time pressures experienced by vendors. <p>There were no further questions.</p> <p>The meeting was closed.</p>