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Aus, NZ progress on joint regulatory agency

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Singapore: Ministers from Australia and New Zealand attended the second meeting of the Australia New Zealand Therapeutic Products Agency (ANZTPA) implementation ministerial council in a continued effort to develop a joint products regulatory scheme.

The meeting, chaired by New Zealand health minister, Mr Tony Ryall, discussed the progress until date on key elements to establish a joint Trans-Tasman therapeutic products scheme and regulator. Other members of the council attending the meeting were the Ms Catherine King, parliamentary secretary for health and ageing; Mr Craig Foss, New Zealand minister of commerce, and the Mr Bernie Ripoll, Australian parliamentary secretary to the treasurer.

ANZTPA will be a joint, trans-Tasman scheme and will be the agency responsible for regulating therapeutic products across both countries. When established, it will replace Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and the New Zealand Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Authority (Medsafe).

Ministers at the meeting announced the launch of a single entry point on ANZTPA for business and consumers, www.anztpa.org. This website will provide a single source of information on progress on the implementation of ANZTPA, as well as a home for publicly available information developed under the auspices of ANZTPA. The single entry point website also contains access to a business-to-business (b2b) project that enables the public to search a single joint database containing information on adverse reactions to medicines. This builds on the publicly available separate databases New Zealand and Australia successfully launched in mid-2012 containing advice on adverse reactions to medicines, providing enhanced access to safety information and improved transparency.

Ministers also noted progress on work currently being undertaken through Australia's TGA and Medsafe in New Zealand including the commencement of joint working groups to help progress development of a common regulatory framework for the application, assessment and approval of therapeutic products in Australia and New Zealand. Ministers noted that work has progressed on the other b2b projects approved at the January 2012 meeting.