



THE HON TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Minister for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

Saturday, March 10, 2012

**WOMEN WITH PIP BREAST IMPLANTS TO RECEIVE
SUBSIDISED MRI SCANS**

Women who know that they have PIP breast implants, or where clinical advice is that they might have, will from Monday be able to access Medicare rebates for MRI services to assess whether their implants are structurally sound, Minister for Health Tanya Plibersek said today.

"For 12 months, from Monday 12 March 2012, women with a PIP implant can access a Medicare rebate for an MRI to assess the state of their implant and whether it has ruptured or not," said Ms Plibersek. The listing of this Medicare item follows independent, expert advice from the Medical Services Advisory Committee.

"Medical advice from the Chief Medical Officer and expert committee is that removal of PIP breast implants in the absence of evidence of rupture is not routinely required.

"We want women to get the best clinical care including access to a subsidised MRI scan if they choose.

"MRI is a key tool for the diagnosis of problem implants at a time when many women with PIP implants maybe fearful about the condition of their breast implants," Ms Plibersek said.

"I know that women who received these implants were shocked when they heard that the manufacturers of the PIP implants had been using unauthorised silicone.

"We want to ensure that women have access to comprehensive and up to date information and the best diagnostic testing available.

"The patient's referring specialist or GP will need to identify in the referral that their patient is known or has a high probability of having a PIP-branded implant so they can be eligible for the Medicare rebate," she said.

Ms Plibersek said the Government would continue to investigate any potential legal liability of the manufacturer and distributor.

"The Therapeutic Goods Administration will continue to monitor and work with therapeutic goods regulators from around the world to identify the latest information and channels of investigation," she said.

For more information regarding the TGA's current advice, visit: <http://www.tga.gov.au/safety/alerts-device-breast-implants-pip.htm> or contact The Breast Implant Information Line which is available 24 hours a day to provide advice and support to people - 1800 945 476.

For media enquiries please call 0427 249 435