

# PBS Announcement Provides Affordable Treatment Option for Patients with an Inherited Form of Metastatic Breast Cancer

*The Australian Government announces Olaparib now available on the PBS for HER2-negative metastatic breast cancer patients with mutated BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene.*

SYDNEY, NSW, AUSTRALIA, January 2, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Australian Government has announced that [Olaparib will now be available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme](#) (PBS), for HER2-negative metastatic breast cancer patients with a faulty or mutated BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene.



Dr Nick Zdenkowski

As part of the PBS listing, the Government has also announced that germline BRCA testing will be reimbursed for all metastatic and early breast cancer patients, who may benefit from Olaparib to reduce their risk of breast cancer recurrence, and not just those with a high hereditary risk.

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*Dr Nick Zdenkowski*

It is estimated that more than 21,194 people in Australia will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year.

Approximately 5-10% of all breast cancers are due to a strong family history or genetic mutation such as BRCA1 and BRCA2, who are generally diagnosed at a younger age.

In world-first data revealed in 2024 by the Cancer Institute NSW, the metastatic breast cancer population in Australia is much larger than previously projected, with around 7,900 people in NSW estimated to be living with this invasive form of cancer that has spread to other parts of

the body, such as the bones, lungs, liver or the brain.

Breast Cancer Trials, Australia's leading breast cancer clinical trials research organisation, has run studies with Olaparib including the OlympiA clinical trial. This trial found that Olaparib reduces breast cancer recurrence by 42%, in patients with early-stage breast cancer who have a BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutation, and also reduces breast cancer deaths by 32% for this patient population where the cancer had not spread beyond the breast or under the arm. This research contributed to Olaparib being listed on the PBS for Australians with an hereditary form of high-risk, early breast cancer.

Dr Nicholas Zdenkowski is the Chair of the Breast Cancer Trials Scientific Advisory Committee and says the announcement is a fantastic result for patients, treating doctors and researchers. "Hundreds of Australians may benefit from the PBS listing of Olaparib, which offers a new, affordable treatment option for patients with an inherited form of metastatic breast cancer," said Dr Zdenkowski.

"Providing patients with effective oral therapies that are well tolerated is vitally important and clinical trials are the only way that these new treatments make their way safely to patients. Olaparib is a targeted treatment that will assist with this in patients with metastatic breast cancer and an inherited (germline) mutation."

"Breast Cancer Trials is now testing this medication through the OLIO clinical trial, to see if it will benefit young patients with early-stage HR-positive, HER2-negative breast cancer. HR-positive breast cancer is the most common type of breast cancer, accounting for approximately 70% of all cases."

Professor Fran Boyle AM is a Medical Oncologist at The Mater Hospital in North Sydney and the former Board Chair of Breast Cancer Trials. She is a founding member of MBC Action Australia, a consumer-led advocacy organisation for people with metastatic breast cancer.

"The listing of Olaparib on the PBS addresses an unmet clinical need for targeted treatments for metastatic breast cancer patients who carry a BRCA gene mutation and it highlights the importance of genetic testing to inform options for targeted treatment," Professor Boyle said. "Patients with a BRCA mutation tend to be younger than others with metastatic breast cancer, and they often balance work and family responsibilities while dealing with the significant psychological and physical demands of a metastatic diagnosis."

"The mutation can be found via a blood test arranged by your oncologist and I am pleased this genetic testing is now reimbursed for metastatic and early breast cancer patients who may benefit from Olaparib, and not just those with a strong hereditary risk."

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