Australian Government
Department of Health and Aged Care
Therapeutic Goods Administration

TGA stakeholder survey report 2022

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Contents

Summary

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) conducts an annual stakeholder survey to improve the way we work with our stakeholders and to help report on our key performance indicators.

The 2022 TGA stakeholder survey was streamlined to help us better identify both the positives and challenges of working with us. We removed questions that didn't provide actionable data, adjusted some stakeholder categories to better reflect the groups that work with us and added questions that will help drive our improvement agenda.

Awareness of the TGA continues to grow in Australia. The 2022 survey found that about 7 out of 10 Australians had heard of the TGA, up by more than 4% from the 2021 survey and more than 17% from the 2020 survey. The survey found that the TGA is trusted to perform its role ethically and with integrity, and most respondents believe we get the balance right between access to therapeutic goods and safety.

Today, many Australians are aware of the TGA because of our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Pleasingly, most respondents believe our response has been effective. While the pandemic's impact on our workload has stabilised, it remains busy and evolving. We continue to assess priority applications for COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics and new rapid antigen tests (RATs). In addition, we are reviewing all COVID-19 laboratory antigen tests and RATs listed on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG).

The 2022 survey found that while most stakeholders have a positive experience communicating with the TGA, this is not universal. While the TGA responded to most enquiries within 5 days, approximately 1 in 8 people waited more than 10 days for a response. In some cases, the information they received did not adequately address their enquiry.

Over the past few years, COVID-19-related issues have put immense pressure on our enquiry channels. As part of the TGA's Transformation Program, we are reviewing our enquiry management model to modernise our approach and offer a more consistent and efficient service. During the last 12 months, the program has also made significant progress to address several long-standing barriers our stakeholders have encountered when interacting with us, including the launch of the new TGA website and trial (beta) versions of the ARTG search tool and Database of Adverse Event Notifications (DAEN) – Medicines.

You can also expect further improvements to our services as part of the Transformation Program, which is progressively digitising many of our processes. We have heard from many industry representatives about the need for greater transparency in the application and assessment process. We are in the early stages of developing a system to address this issue and streamline the processes.

We look forward to sharing the progress of our improvement agenda with you over the next 12 months. For more information, see What happens next.

The survey approach

The TGA is part of the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. The 2022 stakeholder survey was developed in conjunction with the department's Market Research Unit.

Why we conduct the survey

The 2022 stakeholder survey was developed to seek feedback on various aspects of the TGA's role and how key stakeholder groups perceive this role. This feedback helps us improve the way we work with our stakeholders.

The survey also contributes to *TGA's Performance Report July 2021 to June 2022*. This annual self-assessment report evaluates our work against the 3 principles of regulator best practice and the priorities outlined in our 2021-2022 Business Plan.

Sampling methods

Stakeholders were invited to complete the survey using a combination of methods. The consumer and health professional cohorts were provided by Qualtrics LLC, while the cohort representing industry were existing TGA Business Services account holders, invited to opt in to complete the survey.

Consumers

Market research provider Qualtrics LLC was engaged to provide a sample of consumers from a panel it maintains. A sample of 1,046 Australians aged 18 years and older was acquired. The sample was weighted to broadly represent the Australian population across age, gender and location. Respondents completed the questionnaire via an online survey platform.

Fieldwork for the consumer survey commenced on 8 August 2022 and was completed on 16 August 2022. Details are presented in the Consumer results tables.

Opt-in stakeholders

Individual email invitations were sent to users of TGA Business Services—an online system used for conducting transactions with the TGA, including lodging applications for entry of products onto the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods and making payments. It should therefore be noted that opt-in respondents are more likely than other stakeholders to be aware of the TGA and the services we provide.

Of the 1,566 respondents, about 2 in 3 (or 1042 respondents) had roles directly associated with the medical products industry, including manufacturers and sponsors. The remaining respondents had a mix of roles, including retailers, consumer representatives and academics and university researchers.

The opt-in survey commenced on 15 August 2022 and was completed on 2 September 2022. Details are presented in the Opt-in stakeholders tables.

Health professionals

Market research provider Qualtrics LLC provided the TGA with a sample of 304 health professionals. These respondents completed the questionnaire via an online survey platform.

The breakdown of health professional respondents was as follows:

Health professional category	N
General practitioners	31

Pharmacists	32
Dental practitioners	22
Nurses	34
Allied health professionals	30
Other healthcare professionals	155
Total	304

The ‘other healthcare professionals’ category includes randomly selected health professionals working in the healthcare, pharmaceutical or medical industry. This includes specialist medical practitioners and pharmaceutical professionals.

Fieldwork for the health professional survey commenced on 8 August 2022 and was completed on 22 August 2022. Details are presented in the Health professional results tables.

Interpreting percentages and tables

Questions in the consumer and health professional surveys were compulsory. Questions in the opt-in survey were optional to encourage participation, meaning some respondents did not answer every question. Except where stated otherwise, each percentage included in this report is the percentage of respondents who answered the relevant question (not the percentage of total respondents to the survey).

Results tables for stakeholder groups are presented in the latter part of this report. Tables have not been provided for questions with a low number of responses. Abbreviations used in the results tables are defined in Appendix D.

Although many questions in the survey were intended for respondents who were aware of the TGA, some questions did not require awareness of our organisation and its functions. Even where stakeholders were aware of the TGA, many respondents have provided responses of ‘unsure’ or ‘neither agree nor disagree’ to topics they have no knowledge of, which may impact the results.

It’s important to emphasise where responses, especially those from consumers, are in the 65 to 80% range for positive, this does not mean that the rest of the responses were negative. With about 30% stating that they had not heard of the TGA there was a corresponding percentage of ‘neither agree nor disagree’ in many of their responses and typically only a few percent of negative responses on most questions.

Questions relating to the survey can be emailed to tga.education@tga.gov.au.

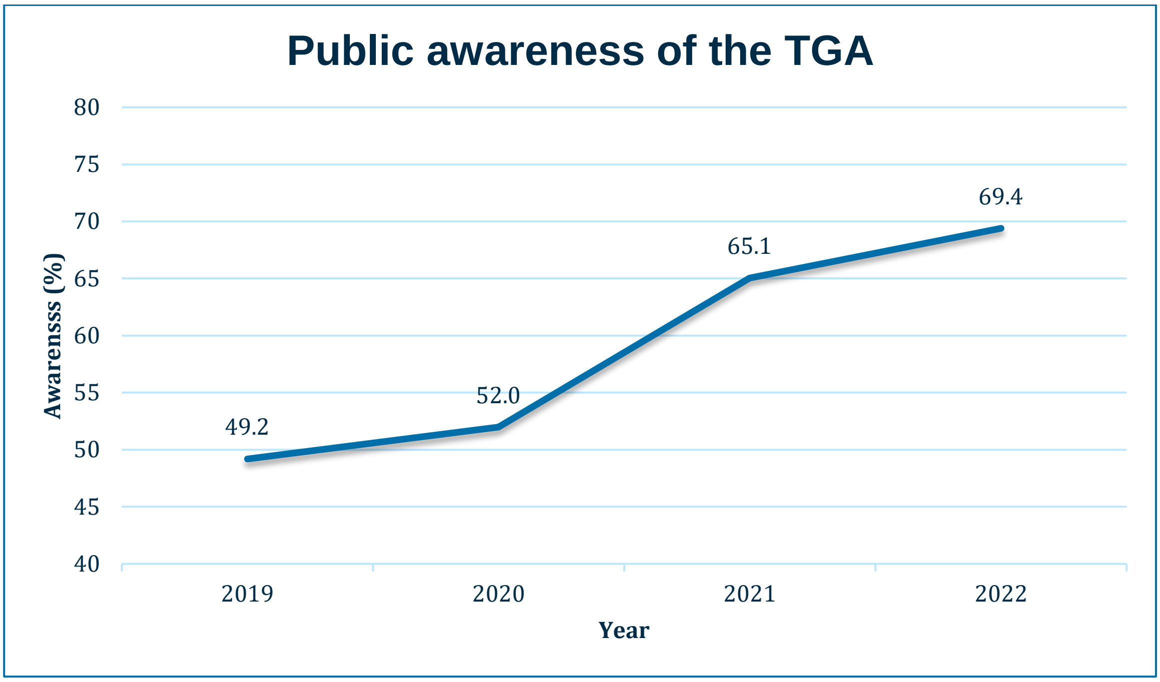
Overview of results

This section of the report summarises the main results for consumers, opt-in stakeholders and health professionals. Some additional insights are provided for other groups as appropriate. Further information can be found in tables in the second part of the report.

Awareness of the TGA

Awareness of the TGA among the Australian population continues to grow and has climbed significantly since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Consumers were asked whether they had heard of the TGA before participating in the survey. Almost 7 in 10 consumers (69.4%) indicated they had. This is higher than the 2021 survey (65%) and significantly higher than the 2020 survey (52%).



Health professionals were more aware of the TGA than consumers, with more than 85% indicating they had heard of us before participating in the survey.

Understanding the TGA’s regulatory scope

All stakeholder groups were asked what they think the TGA regulates. Respondents selected options from a list of five correct options, such as ‘medicines prescribed by a doctor’ and ‘advertising of medicines and medical devices’, and six incorrect options, such as ‘foods’, ‘health professionals’ and ‘medical procedures’.

Most consumers correctly identified what the TGA does and doesn’t regulate. However, only half of respondents correctly identified that we regulate medical devices, while about 1 in 3 people incorrectly believe we regulate medical procedures.

There were similar results among health professionals. These respondents were more likely to correctly identify that the TGA regulates medical devices, but less likely to identify that we regulate medicines in a pharmacy and don’t regulate medical procedures.

Unsurprisingly, opt-in stakeholders were far more knowledgeable about what the TGA regulates since many have conducted business with us.

Although it would be unreasonable to expect everyone to have detailed knowledge of the TGA's regulatory remit if they haven't worked with us, these results demonstrate that there are opportunities to further improve understanding, particularly among health professionals. For readers who wish to learn more about the scope of TGA regulation, our website includes information on what the TGA regulates and what the TGA does not regulate.

Getting the balance right

The TGA aims to strike the right balance between safety for consumers and access to therapeutic goods. We asked respondents who were aware of the TGA to indicate whether they agree or disagree with the statement, 'The TGA gets the balance right between safety for consumers and access to products'.

Among consumers, 63.6% agreed that the TGA gets the balance right, with 8.7% disagreeing. The remaining respondents selected 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'not sure'. The majority of health professionals also believe the TGA gets the balance right, with 78% agreeing and 5% disagreeing. Among opt-in stakeholders, 65% agreed with the statement and 14% disagreed.

While agreement to this statement by consumers and opt-in stakeholders is down compared with the 2021 survey, disagreement has only slightly increased as more respondents selected 'neither agree or disagree' or 'not sure'.

While the results are positive overall, and a level of disagreement is expected given the broad range of therapeutic goods the TGA regulates, we will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure our risk-based approach to regulation gets the balance right.

Trust

Respondents who were aware of the TGA were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement: 'I trust the TGA to act ethically and with integrity'.

Among consumers, 77.5% agreed that the TGA acts ethically and with integrity, while 8.3% disagreed. For opt-in stakeholders, 83.6% agreed and 6.9% disagreed, with regulatory affairs consultants having the greatest level of trust in the TGA (87%), while product sponsors (83%) and product manufacturers (82%) also strongly believe we act ethically and with integrity. These positive results are similar to those in the 2021 survey.

Health professionals also strongly agreed with the statement (78%) and had low rate of disagreement (5%).

Overall, these results demonstrate a continued high level of trust in the TGA among our key stakeholder groups.

Awareness of advertising regulations

The TGA regulates therapeutic goods advertising in Australia, including advertising of nicotine vaping products.

Nicotine vaping products advertising

On 1 October 2021, it became illegal to buy nicotine vaping products—such as nicotine e-cigarettes, nicotine pods and liquid nicotine—from overseas websites without first getting a prescription. In general, it is also illegal to directly advertise these products to Australian consumers.

All stakeholder groups were asked if they were aware that it is illegal to advertise nicotine vaping products to Australians. As the nicotine vaping products rules have only been in place for 12 months, this is the first time this question has been asked in our stakeholder survey.

About 6 in 10 consumers were aware of the rules. Awareness was slightly higher among males (62.1%) than females (58.0%), and highest among 18 to 24-year-olds (70.1%) who are some of the biggest users of these products. Awareness was lowest for people aged 35 to 64 years.

Most health professionals were aware of the new advertising rules for nicotine vaping products (85%), with lower rates of awareness among nursing professionals (71%). Awareness was highest among health professionals more directly affected by the changes, including general practitioners (94%), pharmacists (97%) and pharmaceutical professionals (96%).

Other therapeutic goods advertising

Opt-in stakeholders and health professionals were asked if they advertise therapeutic goods. Those that did were then asked about their awareness of advertising rules for therapeutic goods and the potential consequences of breaking them.

Among opt-in respondents, 35.8% stated that they advertise or arrange the advertising of therapeutic goods. Of this group, 96.7% stated they were aware of the specific rules for advertising therapeutic goods in Australia, and 97.3% stated they were aware of potentially serious consequences for breaking these rules, such as fines and court action. It is important to note, however, that opt-in respondents were recruited through the TGA Business Services portal and many are already highly engaged with the regulatory system.

Almost 44% of health professionals said they advertise or arrange the advising of therapeutic goods, with pharmaceutical professionals and specialist medical practitioners more likely to do so. Of these respondents, 91% were aware of the specific rules for advertising therapeutic goods in Australia, and 93% were aware of the potentially serious consequences for breaking them.

Overall, these results demonstrate a high level of awareness among stakeholders of the rules about advertising nicotine vaping products, and a continued very high awareness of the rules around advertising other therapeutic goods in Australia.

Consumers were not asked specific questions about their awareness of advertising rules for therapeutic goods other than for nicotine vaping products. However, responses to the question about ‘what the TGA regulates’ (see Consumers – understanding of TGA’s regulatory scope) provide an indication of consumer awareness of advertising regulations. When selecting one or more options from a list of correct and incorrect items, 61% of consumers correctly indicated that the TGA regulates ‘advertising of medicines and medical devices’. This is up from 55% in the 2021 stakeholder survey.

Readers can learn more about the regulations for advertising therapeutic goods on our website.

Enforcing the regulations

Two statements were included in the survey to measure stakeholder perceptions of the TGA’s compliance and enforcement activities.

The first statement relates specifically to enforcing advertising regulations: 'The TGA takes strong action against illegal advertising for health products'. Agreement with this statement was 61.8% for consumers (7.9% disagreed), 63.9% for opt-in stakeholders (10.1% disagreed) and 77% for health professionals (3% disagreed).

A second statement aims to capture perceptions of the full range of the TGA's enforcement actions: 'The TGA takes strong action against illegal behaviour'. The pattern of response was similar to the previous statement, with 60.7% of consumers agreeing (8.1% disagreed), 65.4% of opt-in stakeholders agreeing (9.9% disagreed) and 72% for health professionals (5% disagreed).

When taken together, these results suggest that our stakeholders generally believe the TGA takes strong action in response to non-compliance with the therapeutic goods legislation. However, consumer and industry agreement with these statements has fallen slightly, and many respondents across all categories answered 'unsure' or 'neither agree nor disagree'. The TGA will continue to highlight the work it is doing to ensure compliance with therapeutic goods legislation and the enforcement action it is taking.

The TGA website includes more information about compliance actions and outcomes, including a complete list of actions and outcomes.

Responding to COVID-19

Stakeholders who were aware of the TGA were asked whether they agreed or disagreed to the statement: 'The TGA has responded effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic'.

Agreement was 63.4% for consumers (8.1% disagreement), and 67.8% for opt-in stakeholders (9.2% disagreement). Health professionals also generally agreed that the TGA has responded effectively to the pandemic (76% agreed and 5% disagreed). The remaining respondents selected 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'not sure'.

Pleasingly, the consumer and opt-in stakeholder results have marginally improved compared with the 2021 stakeholder survey and indicates that stakeholders remain generally satisfied with the TGA's response to COVID-19.

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic remains a priority for the TGA. There is more information about our response to the pandemic on our COVID-19 page and in the TGA Business Plan 2022-23.

Perceptions of medicines and medical devices

Stakeholders were asked to rate their agreement with a set of statements on the regulation of:

- prescription and non-prescription medicines (excluding complementary medicines)
- complementary medicines, with examples such as 'vitamins, minerals, herbal or aromatherapy products'
- medical devices, with examples such as 'medical gloves, bandages, neck braces, condoms, pregnancy tests, implants and X-ray equipment'.

Similar to the 2021 stakeholder survey, stakeholders were more confident in the regulation of medicines and medical devices than for complementary medicines.

Most consumers believe that medicines are appropriately regulated (72.1%), are confident that the government monitors medicines to identify safety issues (73.5%) and the risks of medicines are balanced against their positive impact (71.6%). Consumers were also confident that the medicines they use are genuine (80.3%) and are manufactured to a high standard (78.6%). Consumer disagreement to all statements was low, with many of the remaining respondents selecting ‘unsure’ or ‘neither agree nor disagree’.

When asked similar questions about medical devices, most consumers believed that medical devices are appropriately regulated (73.6%), are confident that the government monitors medical devices to identify safety issues (73.8%) and the risks of medical devices are balanced against their positive impact (73.7%). They were also confident that the medical devices they use are genuine (77.0%) and are manufactured to a high standard (79.8%). Disagreement to all statements was again low.

For most statements, consumers aged 18 to 24 years were more likely to disagree with the statements about medicines, although the numbers among this group are still relatively low. Disagreement among this group was strongest to the statement: ‘Medicines are manufactured to a high standard’ (15.7%). However, they were less likely to express negative views to the regulation of medical devices.

Consumer perceptions towards complementary medicines wasn’t as positive. Less than half of consumers agreed that complementary medicines are appropriately regulated (47.1% agreed). Consumers also weren’t as confident that the complementary medicines they use are genuine (56.6% agreed), that the government monitors complementary medicines to identify safety issues (55.4% agreed), that the risks of complementary medicines are balanced against their positive impact (51.8% agreed), or that they are manufactured to a high standard (55.3% agreed).

Despite the lower agreement levels to the complementary medicine statements, it should be noted that most of the remaining respondents selected ‘neither agree nor disagree’ or ‘unsure’ and that disagreement rates—while higher than for medical devices and medicines—were still in the minority.

People aged 35 to 44 had the strongest level of disagreement to all the statements about complementary medicines.

Health professionals had more positive views of the regulation of medicines, complementary medicines and medical devices than consumers. However, there was some disagreement with the statement, ‘Complementary medicines are appropriately regulated’ (12% disagreement).

Opt-in medical product industry respondents also generally held positive views about the regulation of medicines and medical devices, but more negative views of the regulation of complementary medicines.

Collaboration and consultations

Respondents who had heard of the TGA were asked to agree or disagree with statements about whether they believed we are collaborative and consultative.

Health professionals were more likely to offer a positive response, with 70% agreeing that ‘the TGA provides opportunities for input into key decisions that impact me’ (5% disagreeing) and 63% agreeing that the ‘TGA listens to feedback’ (4% disagreeing).

Overall, 49.3% of consumers agreed that ‘the TGA provides opportunities to input into key decisions that impact me’ (11.6% disagreed) and 44.6% agreed that the ‘TGA listens to feedback’ (9.5% disagreed). Consumers were more likely to be ‘unsure’ or to ‘neither agree nor disagree’ with these statements.

Of note, 12% more consumers agreed that the TGA provides opportunities for them to input into key decisions than in the 2021 stakeholder survey, while disagreement went down by

6%. This is a good result and shows the work the TGA is doing to ensure the public can have their say on changes that affect them.

Opt-in stakeholders offered both positive and negative responses to these statements, with 55.8% of respondents agreeing that the TGA provides opportunities to provide input into key decisions (15.3% disagreed) and 48.7% agreeing that the TGA listens to feedback (14.9% disagreed).

Health professionals offered the most positive response to these statements, with almost 70% agreeing that the TGA provides opportunities for input into key decisions that impact them (5% disagreed) and almost 63% believing that the TGA listens to feedback (4% disagreed).

While this is an encouraging result overall, there was understandably a high proportion of 'neither agree nor disagree' and 'not sure' responses, indicating that many people hadn't been involved in a TGA consultation process or hadn't needed to collaborate with us. The views of opt-in stakeholders were slightly weaker than in the 2021 stakeholder survey, and we will continue to work with industry to promote collaborative opportunities.

TGA consultations

Respondents who were aware of the TGA were also asked if they had been involved in one of our consultations in the last 12 months. About 1 in 4 opt-in stakeholders had participated in a consultation (26%), with 32% of health professionals and just 6% of consumers.

Respondents who participated in a consultation over the past 12 months were then asked about different aspects of the experience. While the number of consumers who participated in a consultation was relatively small (65 respondents), 3 out of 4 consumers were satisfied with their experience, with 15.4% being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 9.2% being dissatisfied.

The number of health professionals who participated in a TGA consultation process was also quite low (82 respondents), but their experience was very positive, with 93% satisfied and only 4% dissatisfied.

Opt-in stakeholders were more likely to have participated in a consultation process than other respondents. Overall, they agreed the consultation process made it as easy as possible to participate (76.1%), the timeframes for providing input were long enough' (69.3%), the TGA genuinely considered input (54.7%) and that the TGA clearly explained the reasons for the final decision (56.1%).

While there are reasonably high levels of disagreement with each of these statements, it is pleasing that there has been a lift in agreement among opt-in stakeholders compared with the 2021 stakeholder survey against the following statements:

- 'The TGA genuinely considered participant input' (up by 8%)
- 'The TGA clearly explained the reasons for the final decision' (up by 10%).

In total, almost 61% of opt-in stakeholders were satisfied with their overall consultation experience, compared with 15% who were dissatisfied. While not everyone will be pleased with every decision the TGA makes, it is important that participants have a genuine ability to provide input, that their input is appropriately considered and that all final decisions are clearly explained.

When offered an opportunity to provide written feedback as part of the survey, some respondents gave their thoughts on TGA consultations. Some of the positive themes included that the TGA was working more closely with industry. Other respondents expressed dissatisfaction, feeling that stakeholder feedback was not always appropriately considered or that more consultations and workshops should be held.

'*The TGA have come a long way in their consultative approach with Industry. Attitudes & management have changed the culture within the organisation. In my 30 years of experience with the Regulator, I see this as an extremely beneficial step towards the future working relationship between the manufacture supply & TGA approval of therapeutic goods in this country*.'—product sponsor (1500-plus employees).

'*More acknowledgement into responses supplied to the TGA during consultants would be great. Fellow industry members and myself all submitted compelling arguments during consultants and they were not addressed on any level*.'—product sponsor (20-199 employees).

'*I would like the TGA to be more collaborative or engaged with industry. I would like to see the TGA help industry understand certain legislative requirements when they have not been written clearly and are open to interpretation. Some face-to-face sessions with industry on major consultations to help sponsors and the regulator understand each point of view and concerns*.'—product sponsor (200-599 employees).

Readers who wish to learn more about TGA consultations, including the outcomes of closed consultations, can find information on our consultations page.

Contacting the TGA

Over the past two years, the TGA has received an unprecedented level of correspondence because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Compared with 2019, we actioned 60% more enquiries in 2020, and 55% more enquiries in 2021. In the first quarter of 2022, the number of enquiries we actioned was still 15% above pre-pandemic numbers. However, rates have now reduced to pre-COVID levels and we are working hard to ensure stakeholders receive the information they need as soon as possible.

Unsurprisingly, opt-in respondents were much more likely than consumers or health professionals to have contacted the TGA in the past 12 months (81.5%). Of the opt-in respondents, almost 43% said their enquiries were responded to within 2 days, 72.8% within 5 days and 13.5% said it took more than 10 days. Overall, most opt-in stakeholders were satisfied with their experience communicating with the TGA (64.5%), while 15.4% were unsatisfied and 20.1% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Medical industry product respondents were slightly less satisfied with their experience communicating with the TGA, with 62.9% of respondents indicating they were satisfied and 17.1% were unsatisfied (20% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied).

About 16% of consumers indicated they had contacted the TGA, and just under half (45.4%) had received an answer to their enquiry within 2 days, and the majority within 5 days (84.8%). Around 1 in 12 consumers (8.5%) said the TGA took more than 10 days to respond to them. Overall, most consumers were satisfied with their experience communicating with the TGA (67.3%), while 10.9% were unsatisfied and 21.8% were neither satisfied nor unsatisfied.

Almost half of health professionals (47%) said they had contacted the TGA in the past 12 months. More than half (54%) indicated that their enquiry was answered within 2 days, while 85% were answered within 5 days. Only about 1 in 20 respondents said their enquiries took more than 10 days to answers (5%). Overall satisfaction was much higher among health professionals, with 85% satisfied and only 3% unsatisfied (with 13% neither satisfied nor unsatisfied).

When providing written feedback as part of the survey, respondents regularly provided unprompted positive comments about our staff and their helpfulness. However, contacting the TGA was not a universally positive experience for stakeholders. A common theme among those who weren't satisfied was the difficulty to get specific information that addressed their enquiry.

'*As a sponsor I have always found the TGA personnel to be extremely helpful when phoned or emailed for more information or clarification*.'—product sponsor (1-19 employees).

'*TGA have been extremely responsive and understanding when I have reached out to them for advice or action in certain situations. They have a willingness to partner with Industry which is extremely valuable*.' —product sponsor (600-999 employees).

"*Overall communication with TGA is good - if you are aware who to contact directly. Group email addresses and other TGA departments not routinely contacted can be very difficult to get a response from - if you can figure out in the first place who you need to contact*."—product sponsor (20-199 respondents).

Readers can learn more about our customer services standards and how to contact the TGA on our website. If contact information for a specific area of the TGA is not listed on our website, please use the general TGA information line (1800 020 653 free call within Australia) or email info@tga.gov.au.

Rapid antigen tests (RATs)

The TGA assesses rapid antigen tests (RATs) before they are supplied in Australia. A new set of questions was included in the 2022 stakeholder survey to determine how often RATs are used and if there are any common issues being experienced. In the past 12 months:

- more than 8 in 10 Australians have used a RAT (81.6%)
- almost 2 in 3 Australian consumers have used a RAT on 2 or more occasions (65.0%)
- Australians aged 54 years and younger were more likely to have used a RAT than Australians aged 55 years and older
- people living in regional and rural areas were less likely to have used a RAT than those living in capital cities.

Most consumers indicated that they had found the instructions included with the RAT easy to understand (91.3%). Of the relatively small number of people who experienced difficulties, the most common issue was 'the instructions were confusing or badly written', with a smaller number of people saying, 'the pictures were hard to understand' and 'the text size of the instructions made it hard to read'.

Consumers were asked about the last time they used a RAT and whether they had experienced any issues with its performance. Most respondents said they didn't experience any issues (83.5%), while about 1 in 7 people did (14.0%). The most common issues encountered related to a RAT giving a different result compared to a PCR test, including both false positive and false negative results. This was experienced by 8.7% of people who had used a RAT. A smaller number of people either didn't get a result from a RAT or experienced an issue with the test kit, such as broken or missing pieces.

We also asked opt-in stakeholders and health professionals about their experiences using RATs. Overall, these groups were slightly more likely to have used RATs than consumers and slightly less likely to have experienced an issue with the instructions. Health professionals were much more likely to have experienced an issue with the performance of the last RAT they used (29%), with most issues relating to receiving a false positive or false negative result.

Overall, these results indicate that most Australians have used a RAT, found them easy to use and that they performed as expected. However, the results also indicate the importance of confirming a result with a PCR test if further confirmation is needed.

Aware of batch testing COVID-19 and influenza vaccines

The TGA ensures there is an independent quality assessment of every batch of COVID-19 and influenza vaccine supplied in Australia. We asked stakeholders if they were aware of this.

Among consumers, 48.1% of respondents said they were aware, with higher rates of awareness among people aged 65 years and older and those aged 18 to 24 years.

Rates of awareness among opt-in respondents was moderately higher than consumers (56.8%).

Awareness was highest among health professionals, with about 7 in 10 respondents saying they were aware (70%) that the TGA tests every batch of COVID-19 and influenza vaccine. The rates were highest among pharmacists, general practitioners and specialist general practitioners.

Stakeholder information interests

Stakeholders were asked about the types of information they would be interested in receiving from the TGA.

When selecting one or more topics from a list, consumers were most interested in:

- product recalls
- safety and effectiveness information about medicines and medical devices
- reporting problems or side effects of medicines or medical devices.

These were the same three top issues identified by consumers—and in the same order—as in the 2021 stakeholder survey.

Opt-in stakeholders were most interested in receiving information on:

- safety and effectiveness information about medicines and medical devices
- training, workshops or presentations about medicines and medical devices
- product recalls.

Health professionals were most interested in receiving information on:

- safety and effectiveness information about medicines and medical devices
- reporting problems or side effects of medicines or medical devices
- product recalls.

Overall, these results highlight the high interest stakeholders have in safety-related information about medicines and medical devices, and well as reporting adverse events. Readers who wish to stay informed of the latest safety information from the TGA should see the safety information on our website, can subscribe to our safety information email list or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram where important safety alerts and other information is posted, We also offer health professionals practical information and advice through our Medicines Safety Updates and Medical Devices Safety Updates.

Written feedback to the TGA

At the end of the survey, respondents were provided with an opportunity to provide feedback to the TGA on any issue. Stakeholders made diverse comments, some of which have already been included in previous sections of this report and won't be covered here. Minor typographical errors have been corrected where they do not affect the meaning or context of the statement.

Consumers

Consumers who included written feedback at the end of the survey were overwhelmingly positive, with many praising the TGA and the opportunity to learn more about us.

The TGA and its role

Most consumers had positive comments about the TGA and its role.

'One of the most ethical, honest organisations we have today which acts in the interests of all Australians and not "Big Pharma" and appears to maintain the Government of the day at arms length so that it can operate totally independently.'—consumer aged 75 years or older from Adelaide.

'We are very proud of TGA that it is the one of the best Australian organisation and the best in the world in products standards, quality control and policy management with outstanding reputation in overseas countries. Our TGA is greatly admired by overseas people.'—consumer aged 65-74 years from regional NSW.

'*Thank you for your hard work in keeping Australians safe and ensuring medicines are of the appropriate quality and standard*.'—consumer aged 25 to 34 years from Darwin, NT.

Response to COVID-19

Many consumers commented on the TGA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the majority were positive towards the TGA's role, some negative comments were also received.

'*I'm really happy with all the work they are doing to help everyone deal with covid in a safe and orderly and easy way*.'—consumer aged 18 to 24 years from Sydney.

'*TGA have failed us by allowing provisional approval of a trial vaccine for covid without adequate testing and proven safety and efficacy*.'—consumer aged 55 to 64 years from Adelaide.

Nicotine vaping products

The regulation of nicotine vaping products was a feedback topic from a small number of consumers, with opinions both for and against it.

'*I urgently await the banning of and importing of vaping units. I fear for health of children and young adults using them. We need to stop now before it is too late. We have heard research on their make up so why have we not banned them?*'—consumer aged 75 years or older from regional Victoria.

'*Leave vaping products alone. I am a 50 year old woman who likes to vape instead of smoking cigarettes. If I want to vape fruit flavours etc I expect not to be told not to. Look at alcohol and cigarettes and the damage they do instead*.'—consumer aged 45 to 54 years from regional Tasmania.

Opt-in stakeholders

Many opt-in respondents provided written feedback to us at the end of the survey. Common topics included communicating with the TGA, the inability to track an application progress during its assessment and the length of the assessment process.

Application process timeframes and transparency

A significant area of feedback was around the length of time it takes the TGA to assess an application and the inability to track them through the assessment process. A number of people also commented on the TGA Business Services and eBusiness Services portals.

In the 2021–22 financial year, 100% of new devices and variations were processed within the legislated timeframe (255 working days). The mean and median processing timeframes for conformity assessment applications were 139 and 168 business days respectively. This is significantly shorter than in 2020–21 where the mean and median were 157 and 200 business days respectively.

While a number of respondents recognised the priority work the TGA is doing to assess applications that relate to the COVID-19 pandemic, many felt that the application process is too slow. However, this was not universal as some praised the speed and thoroughness of the TGA's approval process.

'*It is satisfying to work with TGA. TGA is generally supportive of the industry and given the pandemic impact on workforce across industries, they have been able to maintain a fairly effective service. In particular, whilst there have been some approval delays, they have been largely able to keep up with the expected timeframe*.'—product sponsor (1-19 employees).

'Timelines for regulatory approvals (particularly medical devices) have completely blown out over the last 6-12 months. Understandably, this was initially attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, but there does not seem to be any improvement or "light at the end of the tunnel"'.—regulatory affairs consultant.

'*I noticed that TGA carries out thorough reviews of the submitted documents. Very professional feedback. Good and fast interaction. Working with TGA is a positive experience. TGA certainly performs better than authorities in many other countries*.'—product manufacturer (20-199).

'As a medical device sponsor I feel there is very little visibility on approval timelines and process - once a submission is made there is not feedback or communication on how the submission is processing or even if it is progressing.'—product sponsor (20-199 employees).

'*eBS site is outdated and difficult to use. It is in desperate need of an update to provide better and more reliable functionality.'*—product sponsor (20-199 employees).

Response to COVID-19

Most feedback from opt-in stakeholders on the TGA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was positive.

'TGA has done an amazing job under incredible pressure throughout the entire pandemic. The staff/team are well informed, skilled, and friendly (…) Great team of professionals who have underpinned our nations response to Covid19. Well Done TGA!'—product sponsor (1-19 employees).

'Appreciate TGA is being agile and responsive during covid.'—product sponsor (200-500 employees).

'*The ignoring of standard TGA practices for the Covid-19 vaccines has undermined your credibility*.'—product manufacturer (1-19 employees).

SMEs and fees and charges

A smaller number of respondents provided feedback calling for more assistance for smaller businesses and on the TGA's fees and charges.

"*The TGA needs to be more flexible when dealing with SMEs. Not every company is a large multi-national with large regulatory teams. From the perspective of the lone RA at an SME, the TGA gives the impression that it believes it is dealing with a large company. The result of this is that the TGA appears to treat SMEs with limited resources as having far more resources available than is realistic*."—product sponsor (20-199 employees).

"*TGA need to consider to have finance support for small business, ie lower of annual fee charge*."—product sponsor (1-19 employees).

Health professionals

With a smaller number of respondents, there were no clear themes or issues from health professionals. Most comments were positive about the TGA and its role.

'*The TGA do an amazing service to the industry.*'—medical practitioner from Perth.

'*TGA has done a good job during covid pandemic (…)*.'—nursing professional from Adelaide.

'*Only hear about them in the media when they are blocking or holding up something eg oral covid medicines*.'—healthcare professional from Adelaide.

What happens next

The 2022 TGA Stakeholder Survey results were used to inform the TGA's Performance Report, July 2021 to June 2022. The survey results also inform our ongoing efforts to improve our performance as a regulator and the way we work with our stakeholders.

The TGA is implementing a Transformation Program that addresses many of the issues stakeholders have identified when interacting with us, including the issues highlighted in this report. The Transformation Program is working to replace outdated information systems with more modern digital tools and streamline processes to make it easier for our stakeholders to engage and conduct business with us.

The program has already made improvements that stakeholders have asked for, including our new website. Our previous website had more than 40 million page views in 2021-22—a 300% increase on pre-pandemic figures. However, users often found it difficult to navigate the website and struggled to find the information they needed.

The new website, launched on 30 August 2022, has a modern and simple interface and improved search function. We have removed about 4,000 pages of old and inaccurate content. Many of the most pages have been moved to be more prominent or have been rewritten in plain language. Further improvements to web content will be our focus over the next 12 months.

While the new website will address many simple or straightforward enquiries, more complex enquiries will still come through other enquiry channels.

Some stakeholders have told us they have experienced challenges getting the information they need when contacting us or have experienced delays in receiving a response. To help address these concerns, we will modernise our enquiry channels and improve the stakeholder experience. We have completed the 'discovery' phase and have gained a better understanding of how enquiries are handled across the TGA and the gaps in our existing processes. The project is currently investigating enquiry management model options before making specific changes.

The Transformation Program will also lead the digitisation of processes that will give our stakeholders greater transparency of their application's progress and provide better user experience. During July 2022 we conducted business services research to identify how stakeholders prefer to access and use our services. The research confirmed the need for a single point of entry to all TGA business services. The proposed single point of entry will allow quick and easy access for stakeholders to apply for products to be included on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods. The new portal aims to streamline the application process, support users to manage their applications and make payments, while increasing the transparency of where an application is at in its assessment.

We look forward to working closely with our stakeholders to design and deliver these important improvements that aim to make it easier to interact with us. For more information on our goals for the next 12 months, see the TGA's 2022-23 Business Plan.

Appendix A: Consumer results

The tables in this section of the report present results for the consumer sample.

- For more information about the consumer sample, see Sampling methods.
- Tables have not been provided for questions with a low number of responses. For general notes about interpreting results tables, see Interpreting percentages and results tables.
- For definitions of abbreviations, see Appendix D: Abbreviations.

Consumers – demographics

Consumers were asked basic demographic questions, including gender, age and location.

Table 1. Consumers – 'What is your gender?'

Gender	N	%
Female	521	49.8
Male	520	49.7
Non-binary	4	0.4
Prefer not to say	1	0.1
Total	1046	100

Table 2. Consumers – 'What is your age?'

Age	N	%
18 - 24	127	12.1
25 - 34	213	20.4
35 - 44	196	18.7
45 - 54	154	14.7
55 - 64	124	11.9
65 - 74	149	14.2
75 or older	83	7.9
Total	1046	100

Table 3. Consumers – 'In which state or territory do you live?'

State	N	%
NSW	294	28.1
VIC	294	28.1
QLD	230	22.0
SA	81	7.7
WA	87	8.3
TAS	27	2.6
ACT	27	2.6
NT	6	0.6
Total	1046	100

Table 4. Consumers – 'Where do you live?'

Region	N	%
Capital city	701	67.0
Regional city/town	247	23.6
Regional/Rural area	92	8.8
Remote area	6	0.6
Total	1046	100

Consumers – awareness of the TGA

Consumers were asked about their awareness of the TGA.

Table 5. Consumers – 'Had you heard of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) prior to participating in this survey?'

Response	N	%
Yes	726	69.4
No	320	30.6

Response	N	%
Total	1046	100

Consumers – awareness of restrictions on advertising nicotine vaping products

Consumers were asked about their awareness of restrictions on advertising nicotine vaping products.

Table 6. Consumers – 'Are you aware that it is illegal to advertise nicotine vaping products to Australian consumers?'

Response	N	%
Yes	629	60.1
No	417	39.9
Total	1046	100

Consumers – understanding of TGA regulatory scope

Consumers were asked what they think the TGA regulates.

Table 7. Consumers – 'What do you think the TGA regulate? Select all that apply.'

Statement	N	%*
Any medicines available in a pharmacy **(correct)**	742	70.9
Medicines prescribed by a doctor **(correct)**	662	66.3
Advertising of medicines and medical devices **(correct)**	637	60.9
Medicines available in supermarkets **(correct)**	636	60.8
Medical devices, such as bandages and pacemakers **(correct)**	528	50.5
Medical procedures (e.g. scans, tests, surgery) **(incorrect)**	366	35
Health professionals (e.g. Doctors, Nurses) **(incorrect)**	320	30.6

Statement	N	%*
Allied health professionals (e.g. Physiotherapists) **(incorrect)**	286	27.3
Veterinary medicines **(incorrect)**	262	25
Cosmetics **(incorrect)**	262	25
Foods **(incorrect)**	225	21.5

Respondents were able to select multiple options.
*Percentage of total sample (N = 1046)

Consumers – TGA performance

Consumers who were aware of the TGA were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a set of statements about the TGA's performance.

Table 8. Consumers – TGA performance items

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Balance right – safety vs access	9	3	6	16	48	16	64	11	726
I trust the TGA – ethics and integrity	8	3	5	11	47	30	78	3	726
Takes strong action – illegal behaviour	8	2	6	16	39	22	61	16	726
Takes strong action – illegal advertising	8	2	6	15	39	23	62	15	726
Responded effectively to COVID-19	8	3	5	19	41	22	63	10	726
Provides input opportunities	12	4	8	21	37	13	49	18	726
Listens to feedback	10	4	5	22	32	13	45	24	726

Consumers – perceptions of medicines

Consumers were asked about their perceptions of medicines. This was prefaced with the following instructions and definitions:

> Shown below are some statements about **medicines (including prescription and non-prescription)** that are available in Australia. Please note: **Medicines do not include complementary medicines** (such as vitamins, minerals, herbal or aromatherapy products). Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

Table 9. Consumers – perceptions of medicines items

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Medicines - appropriately regulated	5.7	2.2	3.5	15.3	53.6	18.5	72.1	6.9	1046
Medicines manufactured to a high standard	4.7	1.6	3.1	11.9	49.1	29.4	78.6	4.9	1046
Confident medicines I buy are genuine	5.0	1.6	3.3	11.3	48.6	31.7	80.3	3.4	1046
Confident government monitors medicine safety issues	6.8	2.3	4.5	14.6	47.8	25.7	73.5	5.1	1046
Risk of medicines balanced against positive impact	5.4	1.4	3.9	16.0	48.9	22.7	71.6	7.1	1046

Consumers – perceptions of complementary medicines

Consumers were asked about their perceptions of complementary medicines. This was prefaced with the following instructions and definitions:

> Shown below are some statements about **complementary medicines** (such as vitamins, minerals, herbal or aromatherapy products) that are available in Australia. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

Table 10. Consumers – perceptions of complementary medicines

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Complementary medicines - appropriately regulated	12.4	2.8	9.7	23.0	36.8	10.3	47.1	17.4	1046
Complementary medicines manufactured to a high standard	7.5	2.0	5.4	24.2	42.6	12.6	55.3	13.1	1046

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Confident complementary medicines I buy are genuine	8.5	1.9	6.6	24.0	41.9	14.7	56.6	10.9	1046
Confident government monitors complementary medicine safety issues	10.4	3.4	7.0	20.6	39.5	16.0	55.4	13.6	1046
Risk of complementary medicines balanced against positive impact	8.3	2.7	5.6	26.8	37.7	14.1	51.8	13.1	1046

Consumers – perceptions of medical devices

Consumers were asked about their perceptions of medical devices. This was prefaced with the following instructions and definitions:

> Shown below are some statements about **medical devices** that are available in Australia. Medical devices include a wide range of products, such as medical gloves, bandages, neck braces, condoms, pregnancy tests, implants and X-ray equipment. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

Table 11. Consumers – perceptions of medical devices

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Medical devices - appropriately regulated	4.0	0.7	3.3	12.7	51.8	21.8	73.6	9.7	1046
Medical devices manufactured to a high standard	2.8	0.5	2.3	11.0	49.5	30.3	79.8	6.4	1046
Confident medical devices I use are genuine	3.1	1.3	1.7	13.1	48.6	28.4	77.0	6.9	1046
Confident government monitors medical device safety issues	4.1	1.1	3.0	13.6	48.7	25.1	73.8	8.5	1046

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Risk of medical devices balanced against positive impact	3.2	1.2	1.9	13.8	49.3	24.4	73.7	9.4	1046

Consumers – consultations

Consumers aware of the TGA were asked about their participation in TGA consultations. Respondents who had participated in a consultation were asked to rate various aspects of the process.

Table 12. Consumers – consultation performance

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Process made it easy to participate	9	2	8	22	37	30	66	3	65
Input timeframes were long enough	8	0	8	14	59	17	75	3	65
TGA genuinely considered input	15	3	12	15	43	22	65	5	65
TGA clearly explained outcome	6	5	2	15	48	26	74	5	65

Table 13. Consumers – ‘Overall, how satisfied were you with the consultation process?’

Statement	Nett D	VD	D	Neither	S	VS	Nett S	N
Overall satisfaction	9	2	8	15	63	12	75	100

Consumers – contacting the TGA

Consumers aware of the TGA were asked if they had contacted us. Respondents who had were asked how long it took for us to respond and their satisfaction with the experience.

Table 14. Consumer – 'In the last 12 months, have you contacted or interacted with the TGA in any of the following ways'

Response	N
By email, phone or online form	112
On social media	93
Been involved in a TGA consultation	65
Another type of interaction (letter, fax etc)	28
None of the Above	543

*Respondents were able to select multiple answers

Table 15. Consumers – 'Generally, how long does it take for the TGA to respond to your enquiry/enquiries?'

Length of time	N	%
Immediately or less than 1 day	21	13
1 to 2 days	54	33
3 to 5 days	65	39
6 to 10 days	11	7
More than 10 days	14	8
Total	165	100

Table 16. Consumers – 'Overall, how satisfied are you with the experience of communicating with the TGA?'

Statement	Nett D	VD	D	Neither	S	VS	Nett S	N
Overall satisfaction (%)	11	6.1	4.8	21.8	50.3	17.0	67.3	165

Consumers – rapid antigen tests (RATs)

Consumers were asked questions about rapid antigen test, including if they had used them, whether they found the instructions easy to understand and if they had experienced any issues using them.

Table 17. Consumers – 'Have you used a rapid antigen test (RAT) or COVID-19 in the past 12 months?'

Have used a RAT (last 12 months)	N	%
Yes - once	174	16.6
Yes - 2-5 times	466	44.6
Yes - more than 5 times	213	20.4
No	185	17.7
Don't know	8	0.8
Total	1046	100

Table 18. Consumers – 'Thinking about the last test you used, were the instructions easy to understand?'

Response	N	%
Yes	779	91.3
No	65	7.6
Don't know	9	1.1
Total	853	100

Table 19. Consumers – 'What issue(s) did you have with the instructions?'

Issue	N	%
The instructions were confusing or badly written	47	72
The pictures were hard to understand	24	37
The text size of the instructions made it hard to read	23	35

Issue	N	%
Other, please describe	2	3

*Respondents were able to select multiple answers

Table 20. Consumers – 'Thinking about the last test you used, did you experience any issues with the performance of the rapid antigen test?'

Response	N	%
No	712	83.5
Yes	119	14.0
Don't know	22	2.6
Total	853	100

Table 21. Consumers – 'What issue did you have?'

Issue	N	%
The test gave me the wrong result - I was positive on the RAT test but negative on PCR testing	38	32
The test gave me the wrong result - I was negative on the RAT test but positive on PCR testing	36	30
The test gave me no result - I couldn't tell if I was positive or negative	23	19
There was an issue with the test kit (such as broken or missing pieces)	14	12
Other	8	7
Total	119	100

*Respondents were asked to pick one main issue only.

Consumers – information interests

Consumers were asked to indicate the types of information they would be interested in receiving from the TGA.

Table 22. Consumers – 'Are you interested in information on any of the following? Select all that apply.'

Statement	N*
Product recalls	519
Safety and effectiveness information about medicines and medical devices	517
Reporting problems or side effects of medicines or medical devices	439
General information about the TGA	380
Accessing medicines and medical devices	366
Information on travelling with medicines and medical devices	363
News and publications	287
Information on consultations	193
Training, workshops or presentations about medicines and medical devices	157

*Respondents were able to select multiple items.

Consumers – COVID-19 and Influenza vaccine batch testing

Consumers were asked about COVID-19 and Influenza vaccine batch testing.

Table 23. Consumers – 'Are you aware the TGA tests every batch of COVID-19 and influenza vaccines before they are distributed around Australia?'

Response	N	%
Yes	503	48.1
No	543	51.9
Total	1046	100

Appendix B: Opt-in stakeholder results

The tables in this section of the report present results for opt-in stakeholders.

- For more information about the consumer sample, see Sampling methods.
- Tables have not been provided for questions with a low number of responses. For general notes about interpreting results tables, see Interpreting percentages and results tables.
- For definitions of abbreviations, see Appendix D: Abbreviations.

Opt-in stakeholders – demographics

Opt-in stakeholders were asked about the industry they belong to. If they work for the medical products industry, they were also asked about their role and the size of the company they work for.

Table 24. Opt-in stakeholders – 'Which of the following best describes you?'

Role	N	%
Medical products industry	1042	66.5
Health professional	125	8.0
Retailer	57	3.6
University Researcher/Academic	50	3.2
Consumer/general public/community member	28	1.8
Consumer representative/advocate	7	0.4
Government official	18	1.1
Other, please specify	239	15.3
Total	1566	100

Table 25. Opt-in stakeholders – 'Which category best describes your role in the medical products industry?'

Role	N	%
Product manufacturer (or you work for a company that is a manufacturer)	315	30.2
Product sponsor (or you work for a company that is a sponsor)	598	57.4

Regulatory affairs consultant	93	8.9
Industry association representative	10	1.0
Other, please specify	26	2.5
Total	1042	100

Table 26. Opt-in stakeholders – How many employees work for the company in Australia (medical products industry)?

Role	N	%
1-19	445	49.1
20-199	288	31.8
200-599	120	13.2
600-999	34	3.7
1000-1499	7	0.8
1500+	13	1.4
Total	907	100

Table 27. Opt-in stakeholders – What type of products do you sponsor? Select all that apply (product sponsors)

Role	N
Prescription medicines	215
Over the counter medicines	110
Complementary medicines	93
Medical devices	428
Blood and/or tissue products	22
Other, please specify	23

Table 28. Opt-in stakeholders – What type of products do you manufacture (product manufacturers)?

Role	N
Prescription medicines	62
Over the counter medicines	42
Complementary medicines	49
Medical devices	199
Blood and/or tissue products	12
Other, please specify	30

Opt-in stakeholders – awareness of advertising obligations

Opt-in stakeholders were asked if they advertise therapeutic goods. Advertisers were then asked about their awareness of therapeutic goods advertising rules and the consequences for breaking them.

Table 29. Opt-in stakeholders – 'Do you advertise or arrange the advertising of therapeutic goods?'

Response	%
Yes	35.8
No	64.2
Total	100

Table 30. Opt-in stakeholders – 'Are you aware that there are specific rules for advertising therapeutic goods in Australia?'

Response*	%
Yes	97
No	3
Total	100

*Number of respondents = 523

Table 31. Opt-in stakeholders – 'Are you aware that there are potentially serious consequences for breaking the therapeutic goods advertising rules in Australia, such as fines or court action?'

Response*	%
Yes	97
No	3
Total	100

*Number of respondents = 522

Opt-in stakeholders – awareness of restrictions on advertising nicotine vaping products

Opt-in stakeholders were asked about their awareness of restrictions on advertising nicotine vaping products.

Table 32. Opt-in stakeholders – 'Are you aware that it is illegal to advertise nicotine vaping products to Australian consumers?'

Response	N	%
Yes	1303	83.3
No	261	16.7
Total	1564	100

Opt-in stakeholders – TGA performance

Opt-in stakeholders who were aware of the TGA were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a set of items about the TGA's performance.

Table 33. Opt-in stakeholders – TGA performance items

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Balance right – safety vs access	13.5	4.3	9.2	15.5	46.5	18.6	65.0	6.0	1545
I trust the TGA – ethics and integrity	6.9	2.9	4.0	7.8	41.1	42.5	83.6	1.6	1542
Takes strong action – illegal behaviour	9.9	2.9	7.0	15.7	38.1	27.3	65.4	8.9	1539

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Takes strong action – illegal advertising	10.1	3.3	6.8	14.9	35.8	28.0	63.9	11.1	1537
Responded effectively to COVID-19	9.2	4.2	5.0	16.2	40.9	26.9	67.8	6.7	1539
Provides input opportunities	15.3	5.5	9.7	22.5	40.5	15.3	55.8	6.5	1539
Listens to feedback	14.9	6.6	8.2	25.2	35.2	13.5	48.7	11.2	1540

Opt-in stakeholders – perceptions of medicines

Opt-in stakeholders were asked about their perceptions of medicines. This was prefaced with the following instructions and definitions:

> Shown below are some statements about **medicines (including prescription and non-prescription)** that are available in Australia. Please note: **Medicines do not include complementary medicines** (such as vitamins, minerals, herbal or aromatherapy products). Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

Table 34. Opt-in stakeholders – perceptions of medicines items

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Medicines - appropriately regulated	5.4	1.5	3.9	8.7	51.3	26.4	77.7	8.2	1549
Medicines manufactured to a high standard	2.6	0.7	1.9	7.7	46.6	34.8	81.4	8.3	1550
Confident medicines I buy are genuine	2.2	0.8	1.4	5.9	47.0	38.7	85.7	6.2	1549
Confident government monitors medicine safety issues	5.4	2.1	3.4	9.8	46.5	32.3	78.7	6.1	1550
Risk of medicines balanced against positive impact	5.8	1.9	3.9	11.1	47.7	28.8	76.5	6.7	1546

Op-in stakeholders – perceptions of complementary medicines

Opt-in stakeholders were asked about their perceptions of complementary medicines. This was prefaced with the following instructions and definitions:

> Shown below are some statements about **complementary medicines** (such as vitamins, minerals, herbal or aromatherapy products) that are available in Australia. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

Table 35. Opt-in stakeholders – perceptions of complementary medicines

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Complementary medicines - appropriately regulated	17.1	3.7	13.4	21.2	31.6	11.4	43.0	18.8	1527
Complementary medicines manufactured to a high standard	9.9	2.2	7.7	25.5	30.4	14.5	44.9	19.6	1523
Confident complementary medicines I buy are genuine	8.3	2.0	6.4	24.2	35.9	14.2	50.1	17.4	1523
Confident government monitors complementary medicine safety issues	13.8	3.2	10.5	20.2	33.9	14.3	48.2	17.8	1519
Risk of complementary medicines balanced against positive impact	13.9	2.9	11.0	25.0	31.5	12.2	43.7	17.3	1523

Opt-in stakeholders – perceptions of medical devices

Opt-in stakeholders were asked about their perceptions of medical devices. This was prefaced with the following instructions and definitions:

> Shown below are some statements about **medical devices** that are available in Australia. Medical devices include a wide range of products, such as medical gloves, bandages, neck braces, condoms, pregnancy tests, implants and X-ray equipment. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

Table 36. Opt-in stakeholders – perceptions of medical devices

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Medical devices - appropriately regulated	8.1	2.2	5.9	10.5	49.6	23.2	72.8	8.7	1510
Medical devices manufactured to a high standard	3.0	1.2	1.9	12.0	48.3	28.1	76.4	8.5	1511
Confident medical devices I use are genuine	2.8	1.1	1.8	10.5	48.4	29.9	78.3	8.3	1509
Confident government monitors medical device safety issues	6.4	1.8	4.6	13.3	45.4	27.5	72.9	7.5	1508
Risk of medical devices balanced against positive impact	6.0	1.7	4.4	13.5	47.4	24.8	72.2	8.2	1507

Opt-in stakeholders – consultations

Opt-in stakeholders aware of the TGA were asked about their participation in TGA consultations. Respondents who had participated were asked to rate the various aspects of the process.

Table 37. Opt-in stakeholders – consultation performance

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Process made it easy to participate	10	3	7	12	58	18	76	3	393
Input timeframes were long enough	16	5	11	11	55	15	69	3	394
TGA genuinely considered input	16	6	10	21	39	16	55	9	393
TGA clearly explained outcome	18	5	13	16	41	15	56	10	394

Table 38. Opt-in stakeholders – 'Overall, how satisfied were you with the consultation process?'

Statement	Nett D	VD	D	Neither	S	VS	Nett S	N
Overall satisfaction (%)	15	3	12	24	50	11	61	394

Opt-in stakeholders – contacting the TGA

Opt-in stakeholders aware of the TGA were asked if they had contacted us. Those who had were asked how long it took for us to respond and their satisfaction with the experience.

Table 39. Opt-in stakeholders – 'In the last 12 months, have you contacted or interacted with the TGA in any of the following ways'

Response	N
By email, phone or online form	1252
On social media	52
Been involved in a TGA consultation	395
Another type of interaction (letter, fax etc)	218
None of the Above	184

*Respondents were able to select multiple answers

Table 40. Opt-in stakeholders – 'Generally, how long does it take for the TGA to respond to your enquiry/enquiries?'

Length of time	N	%
Immediately or less than 1 day	130	10.2
1 to 2 days	417	32.7
3 to 5 days	381	29.9
6 to 10 days	175	13.7
More than 10 days	172	13.5
Total	1275	100

Table 41. Opt-in stakeholders – 'Overall, how satisfied are you with the experience of communicating with the TGA?'

Statement	Nett D	VD	D	Neither	S	VS	Nett S	N
Overall satisfaction (%)	15.4	4.5	11.0	20.1	46.2	18.3	64.5	1276

Opt-in stakeholders – information interests

Opt-in stakeholders were asked to indicate the types of information they would be interested in receiving from the TGA.

Table 42. Opt-in stakeholders– 'Are you interested in information on any of the following? Select all that apply.'

Statement	N
Safety and effectiveness information about medicines and medical devices	933
Training, workshops or presentations about medicines and medical devices	924
Product recalls	813
Reporting problems or side effects of medicines or medical devices	783
News and publications	679
Accessing medicines and medical devices	675
General information about the TGA	661
Information on consultations	563
Information on travelling with medicines and medical devices	324
Other	111

Opt-in stakeholders – COVID-19 and Influenza vaccine batch testing

Opt-in stakeholders were asked about COVID-19 and Influenza vaccine batch testing.

Table 43. Opt-in stakeholders – 'Are you aware the TGA tests every batch of COVID-19 and influenza vaccines before they are distributed around Australia?'

Response	N	%
Yes	851	56.8
No	646	43.2
Total	1497	100

Appendix C: Health professional results

The tables in this section of the report present results health professionals.

- For more information about the consumer sample, see Sampling methods.
- Tables have not been provided for questions with a low number of responses. For general notes about interpreting results tables, see Interpreting percentages and results tables.
- For definitions of abbreviations, see Appendix D: Abbreviations.

Health professionals – role

Health professionals were asked about their specific roles.

Table 44. Health professionals – Your role within the healthcare industry

Response	N	%
General practitioner	31	10
Specialist medical practitioner (other than GP)	22	7
Dental practitioner	22	7
Pharmacist	32	11
Nursing professional	34	11
Allied health professional	30	10
Pharmaceutical professional	22	7
Other healthcare professional	111	37
Total	304	100

Health professionals – awareness of the TGA

Health professionals were asked about their awareness of the TGA.

Table 45. Health professionals – Had you heard of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) prior to participating in this survey?

Response	%
Yes	85
No	15

Response	%
Total	100

Health Professionals – awareness of advertising obligations

Health professionals were asked if they advertise therapeutic goods. Advertisers were then asked about their awareness of therapeutic goods advertising rules and the consequences for breaking them.

Table 46. Health professionals – 'Do you advertise or arrange the advertising of therapeutic goods?'

Response	%
Yes	44
No	56
Total	100

Table 47. Health professionals – 'Are you aware that there are specific rules for advertising therapeutic goods in Australia?'

Response*	%
Yes	91
No	9
Total	100

*Number of respondents = 133

Table 48. Health professionals – 'Are you aware that there are potentially serious consequences for breaking the therapeutic goods advertising rules in Australia, such as fines or court action?'

Response*	%
Yes	93
No	7
Total	100

*Number of respondents = 133

Health professionals – awareness of restrictions on advertising nicotine vaping products

Health professionals were asked about their awareness of restrictions on advertising nicotine vaping products.

Table 49. Health professionals – 'Are you aware that it is illegal to advertise nicotine vaping products to Australian consumers?'

Response	N	%
Yes	259	85
No	45	15
Total	304	100

Health professionals – understanding of TGA regulatory scope

Health professionals were asked about what they think the TGA regulates.

Table 50. Health professionals – 'What does the TGA regulate? Select all that apply.'

Statement	N	%
Medicines prescribed by a doctor **(correct)**	193	64
Medicines available in supermarkets **(correct)**	184	61
Any medicines available in a pharmacy **(correct)**	181	60
Advertising of medicines and medical devices **(correct)**	174	57
Medical devices, such as bandages and pacemakers **(correct)**	168	55
Medical procedures (e.g. scans, tests, surgery) **(incorrect)**	120	40
Health professionals (e.g. Doctors, Nurses) **(incorrect)**	98	32
Allied health professionals (e.g. Physiotherapists) **(incorrect)**	84	28
Veterinary medicines **(incorrect)**	76	25
Foods **(incorrect)**	64	21

Statement	N	%
Cosmetics **(incorrect)**	62	20

Health professional – TGA performance

Health professionals were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a set of items about the TGA's performance.

Table 51. Health professionals – TGA performance

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Balance right – safety vs access	5	3	3	11	52	26	78	6	259
I trust the TGA – ethics and integrity	5	2	3	14	48	30	78	3	259
Takes strong action – illegal advertising	5	0	5	16	36	33	72	7	259
Takes strong action – illegal behaviour	3	1	2	16	41	36	77	4	259
Responded effectively to COVID-19	5	1	4	16	47	29	76	4	259
Provides input opportunities	5	1	5	16	40	30	70	9	259
Listens to feedback	4	0	4	21	36	27	63	12	259

Health professionals – perceptions of medicines

Health professionals were asked about their perceptions of medicines. This was prefaced with the following instructions and definitions:

> Shown below are some statements about **medicines (including prescription and non-prescription)** that are available in Australia. Please note: **Medicines do not include complementary medicines** (such as vitamins, minerals, herbal or aromatherapy products). Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

Table 52. Health professionals – perceptions of medicines

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Medicines - appropriately regulated	6	2	4	12	51	28	79	4	304
Medicines manufactured to a high standard	3	0	3	10	53	31	84	3	304
Confident medicines I buy are genuine	5	1	4	8	42	44	86	1	304
Confident government monitors medicine safety issues	4	1	3	12	43	40	83	2	304
Risk of medicines balanced against positive impact	4	0	4	12	49	32	81	4	304

Health professionals – perceptions of complementary medicines

Health professionals were asked about their perceptions of complementary medicines. This was prefaced with the following instructions and definitions:

> Shown below are some statements about **complementary medicines** (such as vitamins, minerals, herbal or aromatherapy products) that are available in Australia. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

Table 53. Health professionals – perceptions of complementary medicines

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Complementary medicines - appropriately regulated	12	2	10	18	43	24	66	4	304
Complementary medicines - manufactured to a high standard	7	1	6	21	44	23	67	5	304
Confident complementary medicines I buy are genuine	10	2	8	18	42	26	68	5	304

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Confident government monitors medicine safety issues	10	2	7	17	41	27	68	6	304
Risk of medicines balanced against positive impact	8	1	7	18	43	27	70	5	304

Health professionals – perceptions of medical devices

Health professionals were asked about their perceptions of medical devices. This was prefaced with the following instructions and definitions:

> Shown below are some statements about **medical devices** that are available in Australia. Medical devices include a wide range of products, such as medical gloves, bandages, neck braces, condoms, pregnancy tests, implants and X-ray equipment. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

Table 54. Health professionals – perceptions of medical devices

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Medical devices - appropriately regulated	4	1	3	10	50	35	84	2	304
Medical devices manufactured to a high standard	3	0	3	9	52	33	85	2	304
Confident medical devices I use are genuine	3	0	3	9	51	35	86	3	304
Confident government monitors medical device safety issues	3	1	2	11	51	33	84	3	304
Risk of medical devices balanced against positive impact	2	0	2	10	55	29	84	4	304

Health professionals – consultations

Health professionals aware of the TGA were asked about their participation in TGA consultations. Respondents who had participated were asked to rate the various aspects of the process.

Table 55. Opt-in stakeholders – consultation performance

Statement	Nett D	SD	D	Neither	A	SA	Nett A	NS	N
Process made it easy to participate	4	1	2	10	44	42	85	1	82
Input timeframes were long enough	2	0	2	12	57	27	84	1	82
TGA genuinely considered input	1	0	1	9	40	46	87	4	82
TGA clearly explained outcome	4	1	2	5	39	52	92	0	82

Table 56. Opt-in stakeholders – 'Overall, how satisfied were you with the consultation process?'

Statement	Nett D	VD	D	Neither	S	VS	Nett S	N
Overall satisfaction	4	2	1	4	51	42	93	100

Health professionals – contacting the TGA

Health professionals were asked if they had contacted the TGA. Respondents who had were asked about their satisfaction with the experience.

Table 57. Health professionals – 'In the last 12 months, have you contacted or interacted with the TGA in any of the following ways'

Response	N
By email, phone or online form	98
On social media	88
Been involved in a TGA consultation	82

Response	N
Another type of interaction (letter, fax etc)	26
None of the Above	105

*Respondents were able to select multiple answers

Table 58. Health professionals – 'Generally, how long does it take for the TGA to respond to your enquiry/enquiries?'

Length of time	N	%
Immediately or less than 1 day	17	12
1 to 2 days	60	42
3 to 5 days	45	32
6 to 10 days	14	10
More than 10 days	7	5
Total	143	100

Table 59. Health professionals – 'Overall, how satisfied are you with the experience of communicating with the TGA?'

Statement	Nett D	VD	D	Neither	S	VS	Nett S	N
Overall satisfaction	3	2	1	13	62	23	85	100

Health professionals – information interests

Health professionals were asked to indicate the types of information they would be interested in receiving from the TGA.

Table 60. Health professionals – 'Are you interested in information on any of the following? Select all that apply.'

Statement	N
Safety information about medicines and medical devices	182

Reporting problems or side effects of medicines or medical devices	155
Product recalls	142
Accessing medicines and medical devices	136
General information about the TGA	136
Information on traveling with medicines and medical devices	120
Training, workshops or presentations about medicines and medical devices	119
News and publications	101
Information on consultations	77

Health professional – COVID-19 and Influenza vaccine batch testing

Health professionals were asked about COVID-19 and Influenza vaccine batch testing.

Table 61. Health professionals – 'Are you aware the TGA tests every batch of COVID-19 and influenza vaccines before they are distributed around Australia?'

Response	N	%
Yes	214	70
No	90	30
Total	304	100

Appendix D: Abbreviations

Column heading abbreviations in results tables

Agreement scales

Table 62. Abbreviations for agreement scale results tables.

Abbreviation	Definition
N	The number of people who responded to an item.
A	The percentage of N who **agreed**.
SA	The percentage of N who **strongly agreed**.
Nett A	The percentage of N who **agreed or strongly agreed.**
Neither	The percentage of N who **neither agreed nor disagreed.**
D	The percentage of N who **disagreed.**
SD	The percentage of N who **strongly disagreed.**
Nett D	The percentage of N who **disagreed or strongly disagreed.**
NA	**Not applicable**
NS	**Not sure**
TE	**Too early to say**

Satisfaction scales

Table 63. Abbreviations for satisfaction scale results tables.

Abbreviation	Definition
N	The number of people who responded to an item.
S	The percentage of N who were **satisfied**.
VS	The percentage of N who were **very satisfied**.
Nett S	The percentage of N who were **satisfied or very satisfied.**
Neither	The percentage of N who were **neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.**
D	The percentage of N who **dissatisfied.**
VD	The percentage of N who were **very dissatisfied.**
Nett D	The percentage of N who were **dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.**

Version history

Version	Description of change	Author	Effective date
V1.0	Original publication	Regulatory Education Section	

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