

Access Consortium sets 2026 priorities to accelerate work-sharing and improve patient access to innovative medicines

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The MHRA-led Access Consortium 2026 action plan will deepen collaboration, streamline work sharing, and speed up access to safe, high-quality medicines for patients across member countries.

The heads of the regulatory authorities from Australia, Canada, Singapore, Switzerland and the UK agreed priorities to strengthen collaboration and improve regulatory efficiency at the first Access Consortium meeting of 2026 on 30 March 2026, chaired for the first time by MHRA.

An action plan for 2026 was endorsed to support the GROWTH manifesto agreed previously, with particular focus on enhancing work sharing processes.

The Consortium is also developing a shared, secure digital platform to facilitate information sharing and joint regulatory work across all five regulatory authorities.

These improvements aim to shorten response times to expressions of interest and applications submitted through the Access pathway, to support faster access to high quality, safe and effective health products across member countries.

Partners agreed to adopt a strategic approach to communications and engagement, to ensure the Consortium presents a consistent, open and coordinated voice with industry and wider stakeholders.

In addition, the heads of agencies endorsed several areas for development including early work towards a regulatory reliance approach for clinical trials and a new network for scientists involved in batch testing

Reflecting on the meeting, MHRA Chief Executive Lawrence Tallon said:

It's a privilege to pick up the baton from SwissMedic to lead such productive discussions with our Access partners at this pivotal moment.

Together we are building practical systems and processes that will help accelerate access to safe, effective and high quality health products to 150 million patients across our countries, whilst at the same time staying true to our national regulatory obligations.

My thanks go to our Access Consortium partners, for their hard work in driving these improvements and shaping the next phase of regulatory collaboration.

Background to the Access Consortium

The Access Consortium is a partnership of the five national regulatory authorities from Australia, Canada, Singapore, Switzerland and the United Kingdom which work together to promote greater regulatory collaboration and reduce duplication for industry.

Originally established in 2007 as the “ACSS Consortium”, the group expanded in 2020 when the UK joined and adopted the name “Access”. The UK’s MHRA began full participation in work sharing initiatives from January 2021.

The consortium’s vision is to enhance regulatory cooperation to enable innovation, strengthen trust and speed up access to safe, effective and high quality medical products for more than 150 million patients across its member states.

Its 2025–2028 strategic plan is underpinned by the GROWTH manifesto, which sets out commitments in governance, reliance, openness, work sharing and transformation. Through this work, the consortium aims to build a harmonised, trusted and patient-centred global regulatory ecosystem, and to establish Access as one of industry’s preferred pathways for regulatory submission.

For further information visit the Access Consortium website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/access-consortium-sets-2026-priorities-to-accelerate-work-sharing-and-improve-patient-access-to-innovative-medicines>