

## **DRUG PRICES TO RISE UNDER FTA**

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<http://www9.sbs.com.au/worldnews/region.php?id=89863&region=7>

A new report by Australian National University says drug prices will definitely rise under the Free Trade Agreement between Australia and the United States.

The report says the 10 most prescribed brands of drugs in Australia would rise by between 70 and 300 per cent and there will be a 12 per cent increase in public hospital costs of medicine.

The Federal Opposition has said it will oppose the trade agreement in the Senate if it is bad for Australia.

The Director of the New South Wales Council of Social Services, Gary Moore, is urging the Senate not to pass the legislation.

"The reports are quite disturbing because whilst they also verify what many others have said about the impacts on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme, they actually quantify the costs to public health systems, particularly hospitals across the country, because of clauses in the Free Trade Agreement which will allow US pharmaceutical firms to evergreen their current situations and delay the introduction of lower cost generic drugs," he said.

Mr Moore has called for a revision of the proposed changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), saying it should be left as it is.

SOURCE: Radio News, SBS New Media