

From the Deputy Chief Medical Officer
Dr Sloan Harper



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

Circular HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 46/09 TA 164

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

**Subject: Technology Appraisal No 164 –
Febuxostat for the Treatment of Hyperuricaemia in
People with Gout**

Circular Reference: HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 46/2009

Date of Issue: 6 August 2009

For action by:

Chief Executive of HSC Board – **for distribution to:**
Director of Performance Management & Service Improvement
Director of Commissioning
Assistant Directors of Commissioning
Head of Pharmacy and Medicines Management
Family Practitioner Services Leads – for cascade to all
General Practitioners

Chief Executive of Public Health Agency – **for distribution to:**
Director of Public Health
Director of Nursing

Chief Executives of HSC Trusts – **for distribution to:**
Medical Directors – for cascade to relevant staff
Directors of Nursing – for cascade to relevant staff
Heads of Pharmaceutical Services – for cascade to relevant
staff
Directors of Acute Services – for cascade to relevant staff
HSC Clinical and Social Governance Leads

Chief Executives of HSC Special Agencies and NDPBs

For Information to:

Chair of HSC Board
Chair of Public Health Agency
Chairs of HSC Trusts
Chief Executive, Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority
Chief Executive Patient and Client Council
Chief Executive/Postgraduate Dean, NIMDTA
Chief Executive, NICPLD
Chief Executive, NIPEC
Chair, RMSG

Summary of Contents:

Febuxostat is recommended as a possible treatment for chronic
hyperuricaemia in people with gout only if:

- they can't take the medicine allopurinol for medical reasons
or
- the side effects of allopurinol are so bad that the person
either has to stop taking it or can't be given the most
effective dose.

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the content of this Circular should be addressed
to:

Standards & Guidelines Unit
DHSSPS
Room D1.4
Castle Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3SQ

SGU-NICEGuidance@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Related documents:

None

Superseded documents

None

Status of Contents:

Action

Implementation:

Put plans in place within 3 months

Additional copies:

Available to download from

<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/phealth/sqs/sqsd-guidance.htm>

Working for a Healthier People

Chief Medical Officer Group



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Dear Colleagues

Technology Appraisal No 164 – Febuxostat for the Treatment of Hyperuricaemia in People with Gout

Febuxostat is recommended as a possible treatment for chronic hyperuricaemia in people with gout only if:

- they can't take the medicine allopurinol for medical reasons or
- the side effects of allopurinol are so bad that the person either has to stop taking it or can't be given the most effective dose.

People who were already taking febuxostat when the guidance was issued should be able to carry on taking it until they and their healthcare professional(s) decide that it is the right time to stop treatment.

DHSSPS advises that this guidance is valid for Northern Ireland and endorses it for implementation in HSC.

The full NICE guidance is available for download at:

<http://guidance.nice.org.uk/TA164>

The HSC sector also should note that;

- 1. The pharmaceutical company has informed NICE that it is temporarily unable to make the drug available. Once the drug is available DHSSPS will notify HSC organisations accordingly and plans should be put in place within 3 months of that notification, to facilitate implementation of this guidance.**
2. This guidance will be considered for review by NICE in August 2011.
3. This advice does not override or replace the individual responsibility of health professionals to make appropriate decisions in the circumstances of their individual patients, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer. This would, for example, include situations where individual patients have other conditions or complications that need to be taken into account in determining whether the NICE guidance is fully appropriate in their case.
4. NICE has developed tools to help organisations implement this guidance. These are available at <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/TA164> and include costing tools, implementation advice and audit criteria to monitor local practice.

All NICE guidance endorsed by the Department to date can be accessed on the DHSSPS website at: [Safety, Quality and Standards | NICE Guidance | DHSSPS\(NI\)](#)

Circular HSS (PPMD) (NICE) 01/06 issued on 30 June 2006 provides further information on the Northern Ireland process for reviewing NICE guidance and further details on the local status of the Institute's guidance. This circular can be accessed at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/nice_guidance_01-06.pdf

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