

From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride



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

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

Circular HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 67/09 TA 174

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

**Subject: Technology Appraisal No 174 –
Leukaemia (chronic lymphocytic) - Rituximab**

Circular Reference: HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 67/2009

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 relevant Family Practitioner groups

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:

Rituximab is recommended as a possible first treatment for people with chronic lymphocytic leukaemia who are able to take fludarabine in combination with cyclophosphamide.

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the content of this Circular should be addressed to:
Standards & Guidelines Quality Unit
DHSSPS
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Castle Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3SQ

SGU-NICEGuidance@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Date of Issue: 20 November 2009

Related documents:

See Bullet Points 4 & 5 below

Superseded documents

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>

Dear Colleagues

Technology Appraisal No 174 - Leukaemia (chronic lymphocytic) - Rituximab

Rituximab is recommended as a possible first treatment for people with chronic lymphocytic leukaemia who are able to take fludarabine in combination with cyclophosphamide.

Rituximab should only be used in combination with fludarabine and cyclophosphamide.

Rituximab is not recommended in combination with any other chemotherapy agents as a first treatment for chronic lymphocytic leukaemia.

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

The full NICE technology appraisal guideline is available for download at:
<http://guidance.nice.org.uk/TA174>

The HSC sector also should note that;

1. The Department expects HSC organisations to put plans in place within 3 months of the date of issue of this E Mail alert, to facilitate the implementation of this guidance.
2. 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.
3. NICE has developed tools to help organisations implement this guidance. These are available at <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/TA174> and include costing tools, implementation advice and audit criteria to monitor local practice.
4. NICE has developed related guidance and this can be accessed at:

Published post link to NICE from 1 July 2006:

Fludarabine monotherapy for the first-line treatment of chronic lymphocytic leukaemia. NICE technology appraisal guidance 119 (2007). Available from:
www.nice.org.uk/TA119

Published pre 1 July 2006:

Improving outcomes in haematological cancers. NICE cancer service guidance (2003). Available from: www.nice.org.uk/CSGHO

5. NICE is in the process of developing the following related guidance:

Rituximab for the treatment of relapsed chronic lymphocytic leukaemia. NICE technology appraisal guidance (publication expected April 2010).

All NICE guidance endorsed by the Department to date can be accessed on the DHSSPS website at: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/sqsd-guidance-nice-guidance>

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael McBride', written in a cursive style.

DR MICHAEL McBRIDE
Chief Medical Officer