



# Medicine: letermovir (brand name: Prevydis<sup>®</sup>) for prevention of cytomegalovirus reactivation after an allogeneic haematopoietic stem cell transplant

Merck Sharp & Dohme Ltd

## What is letermovir used for?

Letermovir is used to prevent a virus called cytomegalovirus (CMV) from causing serious illness in patients after an allogeneic haematopoietic stem cell transplant (HSCT). An allogeneic HSCT is a procedure where healthy stem cells (blood-forming cells) from a donor are used to replace cells in the patient's bone marrow. This helps the patient grow new bone marrow which will produce healthy blood cells. It is often referred to as a bone marrow transplant and is used to treat conditions such as blood cancers.

CMV is a type of virus that many people have in their body but most people are unaware they have the virus and will experience no symptoms. However, patients who have undergone an HSCT have a weakened immune system and the CMV in their body can become active (CMV reactivation) causing serious illness which delays the patient's recovery from the transplant.

## How does letermovir work?

For CMV to multiply and infect other cells, copies of its genetic material (DNA) are packaged into the protein shells of the virus. Letermovir prevents the viral DNA from being packaged which makes it harder for CMV to multiply and infect other cells. This is expected to prevent CMV causing serious illness in those transplant patients who already have CMV in their body.

### What has SMC said?

SMC has accepted letermovir for preventing CMV reactivation and disease in adults having an allogeneic HSCT who have CMV in their body.



## Why has SMC said this?

SMC looks at how well new medicines work compared with current treatments available in

Scotland and in relation to how much they will cost to buy and administer (for example, if the medicine has to be given at a clinic or side effects have to be monitored).

SMC carefully considers every new medicine to make sure it benefits patients and is considered to be an acceptable use of the limited resources in NHSScotland. When SMC assesses a medicine it takes account of the needs of all patients in NHSScotland, not just those who may be treated with the medicine under consideration.

To do this SMC consider the following:

- Clinical trial and economic evidence from the company that makes the medicine.
- Advice from healthcare professionals about any benefits of the new medicine compared to current treatment, along with how the new medicine is likely to be used.
- Information from patient groups about the potential impact of the medicine on patients and carers.

After careful consideration, applying extra flexibility because letermovir is a medicine for a very rare condition, and after the company applied a confidential discount to the cost of the medicine, SMC was able to accept it as a possible treatment within NHSScotland.

### What does SMC's decision mean for me?

If your healthcare professional thinks letermovir for use as described above is the right medicine for you, you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS in Scotland. For further information see: Medicines in Scotland: What's the right treatment for me? [www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/medicinesbooklet.aspx](http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/medicinesbooklet.aspx)



### More information

The organisation below can provide more information and support for people with blood cancers and their families. SMC is not responsible for the content of any information provided by external organisations.

#### Anthony Nolan



<https://www.anthonynolan.org/>



0303 303 0303

You can find out more about letermovir in the European public assessment report (EPAR) summary for the public by searching for the medicine name on the European Medicines Agency (EMA) website.



<http://www.ema.europa.eu>

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