The Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) has assessed polatuzumab vedotin for the treatment of diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL). It was assessed for use in adult patients with DLBCL that has stopped responding to treatment (refractory) or has come back after previous treatment (relapsed). It is used in combination with the medicines bendamustine and rituximab in patients who cannot have a haematopoietic stem cell transplant (HSCT). This document summarises the SMC decision and what it means for patients.

What has SMC said?
After careful consideration, SMC has accepted polatuzumab vedotin on an interim basis (interim acceptance) for the treatment of DLBCL as described above. Interim acceptance is an option available to SMC for medicines which have received a conditional marketing authorisation or licence. This means that polatuzumab vedotin is accepted for use subject to ongoing evaluation and reassessment once further evidence is available.

This advice takes into account a confidential discount offered by the pharmaceutical company that improves the cost-effectiveness of polatuzumab vedotin.

What does SMC’s decision mean for patients?
The decision to accept polatuzumab vedotin on an interim basis means that if your healthcare professional thinks that it is the right medicine for you, you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS in Scotland. Once further evidence is available, SMC will reassess the medicine and provide an updated decision on its routine availability in NHSScotland. For further information about the interim acceptance option please see:
https://www.scottishmedicines.org.uk/how-we-decide/interim-acceptance-decision-option/

What is polatuzumab vedotin used for?
Polatuzumab vedotin is used to treat DLBCL. This is a form of blood cancer that starts in a type of white blood cell called the B lymphocyte. Polatuzumab vedotin is for treating patients with DLBCL that has stopped responding to treatment (refractory) or has come back after previous treatment (relapsed) and who are not able to have an HSCT. An 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. Polatuzumab vedotin is used in combination with two other medicines called bendamustine and rituximab.

**How does polatuzumab vedotin work?**

Polatuzumab vedotin contains a monoclonal antibody combined with monomethyl auristatin E (MMAE), which is a substance that can kill cancer cells. The monoclonal antibody part of the medicine attaches to a target protein called CD79b on the surface of B cells. Once attached to the cancerous B cells, the medicine releases MMAE into the cells and kills them.

**How does SMC make its decision?**

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 NHS Scotland.

To do this SMC consider the following:

- Evidence from the company about how well the medicine works compared with current treatments available in Scotland, in relation to how much they will cost to buy and administer.
- The potential impact of the medicine on patients and carers.
- 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.

When SMC assesses a medicine it takes account of the needs of all patients in NHS Scotland, not just those who may be treated with the medicine under consideration.

You can find more detailed information about the SMC assessment of polatuzumab vedotin by looking at the SMC Detailed Advice Document (SMC2282).

**More information**

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

**Blood Cancer UK**

- [http://www.bloodcancer.org.uk](http://www.bloodcancer.org.uk)
- 0808 2080 888

**Lymphoma Action**

- [http://www.lymphoma-action.org.uk](http://www.lymphoma-action.org.uk)
- 0808 808 5555

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