



Medicine: venetoclax (brand name: Venclyxto®)

AbbVie

The Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) has assessed venetoclax used together with a particular type of chemotherapy medicine called a hypomethylating agent (for example azacitidine), for the treatment of adults with newly diagnosed acute myeloid leukaemia (AML). It is for patients who are not able to have intensive chemotherapy. This document summarises the SMC decision and what it means for patients.

What has SMC said?

After careful consideration, SMC has accepted venetoclax for treating patients with AML as described above.

This SMC advice takes into account a confidential discount offered by the pharmaceutical company that improves the cost-effectiveness of venetoclax. In addition, SMC was able to apply a more flexible approach* in the assessment, as it is for a rare condition where patients are likely to have a life expectancy of less than three years with currently available treatments.

What does SMC's decision mean for patients?

If your healthcare professional thinks that venetoclax for use as described above is the right medicine for you, you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS in Scotland.



What is venetoclax used for?

Venetoclax is for treating AML, which is a type of cancer of the white blood cells. It starts in the bone marrow but quickly moves into the blood. Venetoclax is used together with a type of chemotherapy medicine called a hypomethylating agent (for example azacitidine) for treating patients who are newly diagnosed with AML and are unable to have intensive chemotherapy.

How does venetoclax work?

Venetoclax works by blocking the actions of a protein called BCL-2. BCL-2 is produced in large amounts by cancerous white blood cells which helps them to survive and build up in the body. By blocking BCL-2, venetoclax helps to reduce the number of cancer cells and slow the progression of the cancer.

*<https://www.scottishmedicines.org.uk/how-we-decide/pace/>

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 NHSScotland.

To do this SMC considers 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.
- Information from patient groups about 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 NHSScotland, not only those who may be treated with the medicine under consideration.

You can find more detailed information about the SMC assessment of venetoclax by looking at the SMC Detailed Advice Document (SMC2412).

More information

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

Leukaemia Care



<https://www.leukaemiacare.org.uk>



0808 801 0444

Blood Cancer UK



<https://bloodcancer.org.uk>



0808 169 5155

You can find out more about venetoclax (Venclyxto®) in the Patient Leaflet by searching for the medicine name on the electronic medicines compendium (EMC) website.



<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/>