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EMA/COMP/787355/2014
Committee for Orphan Medicinal Products

Public summary of opinion on orphan designation

Ponatinib hydrochloride for the treatment of gastrointestinal stromal tumours

On 15 January 2015, orphan designation (EU/3/14/1421) was granted by the European Commission to ARIAD Pharma Ltd, United Kingdom, for ponatinib hydrochloride for the treatment of gastrointestinal stromal tumours.

What are gastrointestinal stromal tumours?

Gastrointestinal stromal tumours (GIST) belong to a group of cancers of the stomach and bowel called sarcomas, which are characterised by uncontrolled growth of cells in the supporting tissues of these organs. GIST are most common in the stomach (60%), followed by the small intestine (30%), and then the colon and rectum (5%). GIST occur predominantly in middle-aged and older persons, and are considered a life-threatening condition because the tumours could come back and also spread to other organs.

What is the estimated number of patients affected by the condition?

At the time of designation, GIST affected approximately 2.2 in 10,000 people in the European Union (EU). This was equivalent to a total of around 112,000 people*, and is below the ceiling for orphan designation, which is 5 people in 10,000. This is based on the information provided by the sponsor and the knowledge of the Committee for Orphan Medicinal Products (COMP).

What treatments are available?

At the time of designation, treatment of GIST mainly consisted in surgical removal of the tumour. The medicines imatinib, sunitinib and regorafenib were authorised in the EU for the treatment of GIST that had spread and could not be surgically removed.

The sponsor has provided sufficient information to show that ponatinib hydrochloride might be of significant benefit for patients with GIST because data from early studies showed that the medicine may improve the outcome of patients whose tumour had progressed after treatment with available

*Disclaimer: For the purpose of the designation, the number of patients affected by the condition is estimated and assessed on the basis of data from the European Union (EU 28), Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. This represents a population of 511,100,000 (Eurostat 2014).



medicines. This assumption will need to be confirmed at the time of marketing authorisation, in order to maintain the orphan status.

How is this medicine expected to work?

Ponatinib hydrochloride belongs to a group of medicines called 'tyrosine kinase inhibitors', which act by blocking enzymes known as tyrosine kinases.

The medicine is expected to work in GIST by blocking the activity of a tyrosine kinase called 'KIT', which is often abnormal (mutated) and overactive in GIST cells, causing them to multiply uncontrollably. By blocking KIT, as well as other kinases such as PDGF, the medicine is expected to help to slow down or stop the growth of the tumour.

In the EU, ponatinib is already authorised as Iclusig for the treatment of leukaemia (a cancer of the blood).

What is the stage of development of this medicine?

The effects of the medicine have been evaluated in experimental models.

At the time of submission of the application for orphan designation, clinical trials with the medicine in patients with GIST were ongoing.

At the time of submission, ponatinib hydrochloride was not authorised anywhere in the EU for GIST or designated as an orphan medicinal product elsewhere for this condition.

In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 141/2000 of 16 December 1999, the COMP adopted a positive opinion on 11 December 2014 recommending the granting of this designation.

Opinions on orphan medicinal product designations are based on the following three criteria:

- the seriousness of the condition;
- the existence of alternative methods of diagnosis, prevention or treatment;
- either the rarity of the condition (affecting not more than 5 in 10,000 people in the EU) or insufficient returns on investment.

Designated orphan medicinal products are products that are still under investigation and are considered for orphan designation on the basis of potential activity. An orphan designation is not a marketing authorisation. As a consequence, demonstration of quality, safety and efficacy is necessary before a product can be granted a marketing authorisation.

For more information

Sponsor's contact details:

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For contact details of patients' organisations whose activities are targeted at rare diseases see:

- [Orphanet](#), a database containing information on rare diseases, which includes a directory of patients' organisations registered in Europe;
- [European Organisation for Rare Diseases \(EURORDIS\)](#), a non-governmental alliance of patient organisations and individuals active in the field of rare diseases.

Translations of the active ingredient and indication in all official EU languages¹, Norwegian and Icelandic

Language	Active ingredient	Indication
English	Ponatinib hydrochloride	Treatment of gastrointestinal stromal tumours
Bulgarian	Понатиниб хидрохлорид	Лечение на гастро-интестинални стромални тумори
Croatian	Ponatinibklorid	Liječenje gastrointestinalnih stromalnih tumora
Czech	Ponatinib hydrochlorid	Léčba gastrointestinálních stromálních tumorů
Danish	Ponatinibhydrochlorid	Behandling af gastrointestinale stromale tumorer
Dutch	Ponatinibhydrochloride	Behandeling van gastro-intestinale stromale tumoren
Estonian	Ponatinibvesinikkloriid	Seedetrakti stroomaalsete kasvajate ravi
Finnish	Ponatinibihydrokloridi	Ruuansulatuskanavan pahanlaatuisten stroomatumorien hoito
French	Chlorhydrate de ponatinib	Traitement des tumeurs stromales gastrointestinales
German	Ponatinibhydrochlorid	Behandlung von gastrointestinalen Stromatumoren
Greek	Πονατινίμπη υδροχλωρική	Θεραπεία των γαστρεντερικών στρωματικών όγκων
Hungarian	Ponatinib hidroklorid	Gasztrointesztinális stromalis tumorok kezelése
Italian	Ponatinib cloridrato	Tattamento dei tumori stromali gastrointestinali
Latvian	Ponatiniba hidrohlorīds	Kuņģa-zarnu trakta stromas audzēju terapija
Lithuanian	Ponatinibo hidrochloridas	Skrandžio ir žarnų stromos auglių gydymas
Maltese	Ponatinib hydrochloride	Kura ta' tumuri gastrointestinali li jizviluppaw fit-tessuti konnettivi
Polish	Chlorowodorek ponatynibu	Leczenie nowotworów podścieliska przewodu pokarmowego
Portuguese	Cloridrato de ponatinib	Tratamento de tumores estromais gastrointestinais
Romanian	Clorhidrat de ponatinib	Tratamentul tumorilor stromale gastro-intestinale
Slovak	Ponatinib hydrochlorid	Liečba gastrointestinálnych stromálnych nádorov
Slovenian	Ponatinib hidroklorid	Zdravljenje gastrointestinalnih stromalnih tumorjev
Spanish	Clorhidrato de ponatinib	Tratamiento de los tumores del estroma gastrointestinal
Swedish	Ponatinib hydroklorid	Behandling av gastrointestinala stromala tumörer
Norwegian	Ponatinibhydroklorid	Behandling av gastrointestinale stromale tumorer
Icelandic	Pónatíníþ hýdróklóríð	Meðferð við grunnfrumuæxlum í meltingarfærum

¹ At the time of designation