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Committee for Orphan Medicinal Products

Public summary of opinion on orphan designation

Recombinant fusion protein consisting of the extracellular portion of CD95 fused to the Fc part of a human IgG1 molecule for the treatment of glioma

On 28 January 2010, orphan designation (EU/3/09/709) was granted by the European Commission to Apogenix GmbH, Germany, for recombinant fusion protein consisting of the extracellular portion of CD95 fused to the Fc part of a human IgG1 molecule for the treatment of glioma.

What is glioma?

Glioma is a type of brain tumour that affects the 'glial' cells (the cells that surround and support the nerve cells). Patients with glioma can have severe symptoms, but the types of symptoms experienced depend on where the tumour develops in the brain. Symptoms can include headaches, nausea (feeling sick), loss of appetite, vomiting, and changes in personality, mood, mental capacity and concentration. About a fifth of patients with glioma have seizures (fits) for months or years before the disease is diagnosed.

Glioma is a debilitating and life-threatening disease because of the severe damage to the brain that is associated with poor long-term survival.

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

At the time of designation, glioma affected approximately 1 in 10,000 people in the European Union (EU)*. This is equivalent to a total of around 50,000 people, and is below the threshold for orphan designation, which is 5 people in 10,000. This is based on the information provided by the sponsor and knowledge of the Committee for Orphan Medicinal Products (COMP).

What treatments are available?

At the time of designation, several medicines were authorised for the treatment of glioma in the EU. Treatments for glioma included surgery, radiotherapy (treatment with radiation) and chemotherapy

*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 27), Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. This represents a population of 504,800,000 (Eurostat 2009).

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(medicines to treat cancer). Patients also received treatments for the symptoms of glioma, including corticosteroids to reduce pressure within the skull and medicines to prevent seizures.

The sponsor has provided sufficient information to show that recombinant fusion protein consisting of the extracellular portion of CD95 fused to the Fc part of a human IgG1 molecule might be of significant benefit for patients with glioma because it works in a different way to existing treatments and because early studies indicate that it might improve the overall outcome of patients with this condition. These assumptions 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?

This medicine is a 'fusion' protein that is made up of two components:

- a portion of CD95, a receptor that is found in large amounts on the surface of glioma cells;
- a part of a human IgG1 molecule, a type of human antibody that can bind to specific structures and help the body to fight infections and other diseases.

These two components are artificially engineered to form an antibody-like compound that is expected to attach to CD95L. CD95L is a substance that is involved in the growth and spread of cancer cells. It normally attaches to CD95 and activates the receptor. By attaching to CD95L, this medicine blocks its activity, therefore blocking the migration of glioma cells further into the brain. This is expected to slow down the spread of glioma.

What is the stage of development of this medicine?

The effects of recombinant fusion protein consisting of the extracellular portion of CD95 fused to the Fc part of a human IgG1 molecule have been evaluated in experimental models.

At the time of submission of the application for orphan designation, no clinical trials of this medicine in patients with glioma had been started.

At the time of submission, this medicine was not authorised anywhere in the EU for glioma 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 5 November 2009 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 Community) 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

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

Language	Active ingredient	Indication
English	Recombinant fusion protein consisting of the extracellular portion of CD95 fused to the Fc part of a human IgG1 molecule	Treatment of glioma
Bulgarian	Рекомбинантен фузионен протеин, състоящ се от екстрацелуларната част на CD95, свързана към Fc частта на молекула човешки IgG1	Лечение на глиома
Czech	Rekombinantní fúzní protein s extracelulárním CD95 fúzovaným k Fc fragmentu IgG1	Léčba gliomů
Danish	Rekombinant fusionsprotein bestående af den ekstracellulære del af CD95 bundet til Fc delen af et humant IgG1 molekyle	Behandling af gliom
Dutch	Recombinant fusie proteïne omvattende het extracellulair deel van CD95 gefuseerd aan het Fc fragment van humaan IgG1	Behandeling van glioma
Estonian	Rekombinantne liitproteiin, mis koosneb CD95 ekstratsellulaarsest osast, mis on liitunud inimese IgG1 molekuli Fc osaga v	Glioomi ravi
Finnish	Rekombinanttitekniikalla tuotettu fuusioproteiini, jossa on CD95:n ekstrasellulaariosa yhdistettynä ihmisen IgG1-molekyylin Fc-osaan	Gliooman hoito
French	Protéine de fusion de la partie extracellulaire du CD95 et de la partie Fc de l'IgG1 humaine	Traitement des gliomes
German	Rekombinantes Fusionsprotein bestehend aus dem extrazellulären Fragment von CD95 fusioniert mit dem Fc Fragment des humanen IgG1 Moleküls	Behandlung von Gliomen
Greek	Ανασυνδυασμένη πρωτεϊνη σύντηξης αποτελούμενη από το εξωκυτταρικό τμήμα του CD95 και το τμήμα Fc του μορίου ανθρώπινης ανοσοσφαιρίνης IgG1	Θεραπεία του γλοιώματος
Hungarian	Humán IgG1molekula Fc részéhez kötött CD95 extracelluláris részét tartalmazó rekombináns fúziós fehérje	Glioma kezelése
Italian	Proteina ricombinante di fusione, composta dalla porzione extracellulare del CD95 fusa al frammento Fc di IgG1 umana	Trattamento del glioma
Latvian	Rekombinantās fūzijas proteīns, kas sastāv no CD95 ārpussūnu devas savienojumā ar cilvēka IgG1 molekulas daļu	Gliomas ārstēšana
Lithuanian	Rekombinantinis sulietas baltymas, susidedantis iš ekstra-ląstelinio CD95 fragmento, sulieto su žmogaus IgG1 Fc fragmentu.	Gliomos gydymas
Maltese	Proteina tal-fużjoni rikombinanti li tikkonsisti mill-porzjon extraċellulari ta' CD95 magħqud mal-parti fc ta' molekula IgG1 umana	Kura tal-glioma
Polish	Rekombinowane białko fuzyjne złożone z części zewnątrzkomórkowej CD95 połączonej z częścią Fc cząsteczki ludzkiej IgG1	Leczenie glejaka
Portuguese	Proteína de fusão recombinante composta pela parte extracelular do CD95 fundida com a parte Fc da IgG1 humana	Tratamento do glioma
Romanian	Proteină recombinantă de fuziune constând din porţiunea extracelulară a CD95 fuzionată cu partea fc a moleculei IgG1umane	Tratamentul gliomului
Slovak	Rekombinantný fúzny proteín zložený z extracelulárnej časti CD95 spojenej s časťou Fc ľudskej IgG1 molekuly	Liečba gliómu

Language	Active ingredient	Indication
Slovenian	Rekombinantni fuzijski protein, sestavljen iz ekstracelularnega dela CD95 in Fc segmenta humanega IgG1	Zdravljenje glioma
Spanish	Proteína recombinante de fusión constituída por la fracción extracelular del receptor CD95 fusionada a la fracción Fc de la immunoglobulina humana IgG1	Tratamiento del glioma
Swedish	Rekombinant fusionsprotein består av extracellulär del av CD95 fusionerad till Fc delen av männsklig IgG1 molekyl	Behandling av gliom
Norwegian	Rekombinant fusjonsprotein bestående av ekstracellulær del av CD95 kombinert med Fc-delen av humant IgG1 molekyl	Behandling av gliom
Icelandic	Raðbrigða tengiprótein framleitt með sem samanstendur af utanfrumuhluta CD95 tengdur við Fc hluta manna IgG1 sameindar	Meðferð á glíóma