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Public summary of opinion on orphan designation

Axicabtagene ciloleucel for the treatment of marginal zone lymphoma

On 26 June 2020, orphan designation EU/3/20/2296 was granted by the European Commission to Kite Pharma EU B.V., Netherlands, for axicabtagene ciloleucel for the treatment of marginal zone lymphoma.

What is marginal zone lymphoma?

Marginal zone lymphoma is a group of slow-growing cancers of blood cells called B lymphocytes or B cells. In most cases it grows outside the lymph nodes (glands throughout the body that are part of the body's natural defences), in places such as the stomach, salivary gland, thyroid, eyes, lungs, spleen and blood. Symptoms of the disease depend on where the lymphoma develops.

Marginal zone lymphoma is a life-threatening and long-term debilitating disease due to its effects on the spleen, lymph nodes and bone marrow, as well as the increased risk of infection.

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

At the time of designation, marginal zone lymphoma affected approximately 1.7 in 10,000 people in the European Union (EU). This was equivalent to a total of around 88,000 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, the main treatments for marginal zone lymphoma available in the EU included chemotherapy (cancer medicines), immunotherapy (using the body's own immune system to kill cancer cells) with the medicine rituximab, radiotherapy (treatment with radiation) and surgery to remove affected lymph nodes. In some patients, marginal zone lymphoma affecting the stomach is associated with infection by the bacterium *Helicobacter pylori*, and treatment with antibiotics is used.

*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, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and the United Kingdom. This represents a population of 519,200,000 (Eurostat 2020).

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The sponsor has provided sufficient information to show that the medicine might be of significant benefit for patients with marginal zone lymphoma because the cancer responded to the medicine in some patients whose disease had not responded or had come back after other treatments. 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?

The medicine is a form of immunotherapy. It contains the patient's own T cells (a type of white blood cell) that have been modified in the laboratory to make a protein called chimeric antigen receptor (CAR). CAR can attach to another protein called CD19 found on the cancer cells.

When the medicine is given to the patient, the modified T cells are expected to attach to and kill the cancer cells, thereby helping to clear the cancer from the body.

What is the stage of development of this medicine?

The effects of axicabtagene ciloleucel have been evaluated in experimental models.

At the time of submission of the application for orphan designation, clinical trials with axicabtagene ciloleucel in patients with marginal zone lymphoma were ongoing.

At the time of submission, axicabtagene ciloleucel was authorised in the EU for diffuse large B-cell lymphoma and primary mediastinal large B-cell lymphoma, under the name Yescarta. The medicine was not authorised anywhere in the EU for the treatment of marginal zone lymphoma or designated as an orphan medicinal product elsewhere for this condition.

In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 141/2000, the COMP adopted a positive opinion on 20 May 2020, 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

Contact details of the current sponsor for this orphan designation can be found on EMA website.

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 languages[1], Norwegian and Icelandic

Language	Active ingredient	Indication
English	Axicabtagene ciloleucel	Treatment of marginal zone lymphoma
Bulgarian	Аксикабтаген силолевсел	Лечение на маргинално зонален лимфом
Croatian	Aksikabtagen ciloleucel	Liječenje limfoma marginalne zone
Czech	Axicabtagene ciloleucel	Léčba lymfomu z marginální zóny
Danish	Axicabtagenciloleucel	Behandling af marginalzonelymfom
Dutch	Axicabtagene ciloleucel	Behandeling van marginale zone lymfoom
Estonian	Aksikabtageen tsiloleutseel	Marginaaltsooni lümfoomi ravi
Finnish	Aksikabtageenisiloleuseeli	Marginaalivyöhykkeen lymfooman hoito
French	Axicabtagène ciloleucel	Traitement du lymphome de la zone marginale
German	Axicabtagen-Ciloleucel	Behandlung des Marginalzonenlymphoms
Greek	Axicabtagene ciloleucel	Θεραπεία του λεμφώματος μεθοριακής ζώνης
Hungarian	Axikabtagen ciloleucel	Marginális zóna lymphoma kezelése
Italian	Axicabtagene ciloleucel	Trattamento del linfoma della zona marginale
Latvian	Aksikabtagēna ciloleicels	Marginālo zonu limfomas ārstēšana
Lithuanian	Aksikabtagenas ciloleucelas	Marginalinės zonos limfomos gydymas
Maltese	Assikabtaġene ċilolewkel	Kura ta’ limfoma taż-żona marġinali
Polish	Aksykabtagen cyloleucel	Leczenie chłoniaka strefy brzeżnej
Portuguese	Axicabtagene ciloleucel	Tratamento do linfoma da zona marginal
Romanian	Axicabtagen ciloleucel	Tratamentul limfomului de zonă marginală
Slovak	Axikabtagén ciloleucel	Liečba lymfómu z marginálnej zóny
Slovenian	Aksikabtagen ciloleucel	Zdravljenje limfoma marginalne cone
Spanish	Axicabtagén ciloleucel	Tratamiento del linfoma de la zona marginal
Swedish	Axikabtagen-ciloleucel	Behandling av marginalzonslymfom
Norwegian	Aksikabtagene ciloleucel	Behandling av marginalsonelymfom
Icelandic	Axicabtagene ciloleucel	Meðferð við jaðarsvæðiseitilkrabbameini

[1] At the time of designation