EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH

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Committee for Orphan Medicinal Products

Recommendation for maintenance of orphan designation at the time of marketing authorisation

Imbruvica (ibrutinib) for the treatment of mantle cell lymphoma

During its meeting of 2 to 4 September 2014, the Committee for Orphan Medicinal Products (COMP) reviewed the designation EU/3/13/1115 for Imbruvica (ibrutinib[1]) as an orphan medicinal product for the treatment of mantle cell lymphoma. The COMP assessed whether, at the time of marketing authorisation, the medicinal product still met the criteria for orphan designation. The Committee looked at the seriousness and prevalence of the condition, and the existence of other methods of treatment. As other methods of treatment are authorised in the European Union (EU), the COMP also considered whether the medicine is of significant benefit to patients with mantle cell lymphoma. The COMP recommended that the orphan designation of the medicine be maintained[2].

Life-threatening or long-term debilitating nature of the condition

The Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) recommended the authorisation of Imbruvica for:

'treatment of adult patients with relapsed or refractory mantle cell lymphoma'.

This falls within the scope of the product's designated orphan indication, which is: 'treatment of mantle cell lymphoma'.

The COMP concluded that there had been no change in the seriousness of the condition since the orphan designation in 2013. Mantle cell lymphoma remains a debilitating and life-threatening condition that progresses quickly and is associated with poor overall survival.

[1] Previously known as 1-[(3R)-3-[4-amino-3-(4-phenoxyphenyl)-1H- pyrazolo [3,4-d]pyrimidin-1-yl]-1-piperidinyl]-2-propen-1-one.
[2] The maintenance of the orphan designation at time of marketing authorisation would, except in specific situations, give an orphan medicinal product 10 years of market exclusivity in the EU. This means that in the 10 years after its authorisation similar products with a comparable therapeutic indication cannot be placed on the market.

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Prevalence of the condition

The sponsor provided information on the prevalence of mantle cell lymphoma based on data from the GLOBOCAN 2008 database.

On the basis of the information provided by the sponsor and the knowledge of the COMP, the COMP concluded that the prevalence of mantle cell lymphoma remains below the ceiling for orphan designation, which is 5 people in 10,000. At the time of the review of the orphan designation, the prevalence was still estimated to be less than 0.6 people in 10,000. This is equivalent to a total of fewer than 31,000 people in the EU.

Existence of other methods of treatment

The COMP noted that, at the time of the review of the orphan designation, patients with mantle cell lymphoma were treated with chemotherapy (medicines to treat cancer) combined with monoclonal antibodies. Temsirolimus was specifically authorised in the EU for the treatment of relapsed or refractory mantle cell lymphoma (i.e. mantle cell lymphoma that has come back after previous treatment or has not responded to other treatments). Autologous haematopoietic (blood) stem-cell transplantation was used in some patients for whom it was suitable (this is a complex procedure where patients receive their own stem cells to help restore the bone marrow).

Significant benefit of Imbruvica

The COMP concluded that the claim of a significant benefit of Imbruvica in mantle cell lymphoma is justified by data showing that in patients with relapsed or refractory mantle cell lymphoma, a group with poor prognosis, treatment with Imbruvica significantly prolonged patient's overall survival (how long they lived) and progression-free survival (how long they lived without their disease getting worse). In addition, the COMP noted that Imbruvica has the advantage of being available as capsules that can be taken by mouth at home unlike current treatments that are given by injection in hospital.

Therefore, although other methods for the treatment of this condition have been authorised in the EU, the COMP concluded that Imbruvica is of significant benefit to patients affected by mantle cell lymphoma.

Conclusions

Based on the data submitted and the scientific discussion within the COMP, the COMP considered that Imbruvica still meets the criteria for designation as an orphan medicinal product and that it should remain in the Community Register of Orphan Medicinal Products.

Further information on the current regulatory status of Imbruvica can be found in the European public assessment report (EPAR) on the Agency's website ema.europa.eu/Find medicine/Human medicines/European Public Assessment Reports.