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Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP)

Scientific conclusions and grounds for the variation to the terms of the marketing authorisation(s)

Active substance(s): sufentanil

Procedure No. EMEA/H/C/PSUSA/00002798/202111

Period covered by the PSUR: 30 November 2018 To: 30 November 2021

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Scientific conclusions

Taking into account the PRAC Assessment Report on the PSUR(s) for sufentanil, the scientific conclusions of CHMP are as follows:

Opioid induced hyperalgesia (OIH) is a well-established phenomenon and no particular opioid has been shown consistently to be devoid of OIH effects. The PRAC is of the opinion that product labelling for all sufentanil-containing products should be updated to include proper warning concerning the characteristics of this phenomenon and how to proceed when there is a suspicion of its occurrence. Update of section 4.4. of the SmPC and section 2 of the Package Leaflet is therefore proposed.

There is a body of evidence and number of publications showing an increased risk of opioid overdose, respiratory depression and death due to concomitant use of opioids and gabapentinoids, considered to be a class effect. A corresponding warning is introduced in Product Information.

The literature evidence suggests, based on observational and interventional studies, that opioids are a risk factor for central sleep apnoea (CSA). There is also evidence that opioids increase the risk in a dose-dependent manner and that the effect is reversible with opioid cessation or dose reduction. An increasing number of publications on the topic have been found in the public domain suggesting a class effect of opioids. There is a plausible theory, that the effect of opioids on the CNS influences the breathing cycle. The Product Information is updated accordingly.

Lastly, harmonisation of section 4.4. of the SmPC and section 2 of the Package Leaflet regarding abuse potential and tolerance with other sufentanil containing products is proposed.

The CHMP agrees with the scientific conclusions made by the PRAC.

Grounds for the variation to the terms of the marketing authorisation(s)

On the basis of the scientific conclusions for sufentanil the CHMP is of the opinion that the benefit-risk balance of the medicinal product(s) containing sufentanil is unchanged subject to the proposed changes to the product information

The CHMP recommends that the terms of the marketing authorisation(s) should be varied.