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National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

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Dear Consultees and Commentator,

Health Technology Appraisals

Technology appraisal guidance 87 (TA87) and the new FAD for secondary prevention

TA87 was published in January 2005 and sets out recommendations on the prevention of further fractures for postmenopausal women who have already had an osteoporotic fracture. The drugs covered in TA87 are alendronate, etidronate and risedronate, raloxifene and teriparatide. TA87 includes recommendations for initiation of treatment and options for women who are found to be intolerant or contraindicated to the initial treatment, and who experience an unsatisfactory response to treatment.

The Institute is now issuing the following two FADs for appeal:

- Alendronate, etidronate, risedronate, raloxifene and strontium ranelate for the primary prevention of osteoporotic fragility fractures in postmenopausal women

- Alendronate, etidronate, risedronate, raloxifene, strontium ranelate and teriparatide for the secondary prevention of osteoporotic fragility fractures in postmenopausal women

NICE is also developing a clinical guideline on 'Osteoporosis: assessment of fracture risk and the prevention of osteoporotic fractures in individuals at high risk'. The two currently issued FADs relate only to the initiation of therapy for the prevention of fragility fractures in postmenopausal women who have osteoporosis. The clinical guideline will cover broader issues including the treatment of women who are contraindicated to the initial treatment, have withdrawn from initial treatment, who have osteopenia, and who are on long-term corticosteroid therapy.

When the updated recommendations on secondary prevention of osteoporotic fragility fractures in postmenopausal women are issued as final guidance, these will replace the recommendations in TA87 related to initiation of treatment.
In circumstances where initiation of treatment with alendronate is not possible because it is contra-indicated or a woman has withdrawn from alendronate treatment, the recommendations in TA87 apply. This application of TA 87 will only be valid until the clinical guideline is published.

Yours sincerely

Dr Carole Longson
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