



**National Institute for
Health and Clinical Excellence**

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PRESS RELEASE

**NICE recommends pemetrexed disodium (Alimta) for
the treatment of mesothelioma**

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has today (23 January) published final guidance on the use of pemetrexed disodium (Alimta) for the treatment of malignant pleural mesothelioma (MPM).

The guidance recommends pemetrexed disodium as a treatment option for MPM in people who have a World Health Organization (WHO) performance status of 0 or 1, who are considered to have advanced disease and for whom surgical resection is considered inappropriate.

Dr Gillian Leng, Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Lead for this guidance commented: “NICE was asked to produce guidance on pemetrexed because there was genuine uncertainty regarding its role in the treatment of mesothelioma. I know that some patients and healthcare professionals have criticised the time it has taken for us to issue guidance. However, it is important that interested parties can challenge our decisions and therefore our process allows for appeals against draft recommendations. In this instance two separate appeal stages have delayed the publication of our final guidance. However I am confident that we have reached the right conclusion and as a result our guidance will lead to a uniform uptake of this important new treatment for the majority of people with MPM.”

Ends

For more information call the NICE press office on 020 7067 5900 or 07775 583 813

Notes to Editors

1. The guidance, together with the decision of the Appeal Panel, is available (from 00.01 on 23 January 2008) on the NICE website at: www.nice.org.uk/TA135
2. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health.
3. NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:
 - **public health** – guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention of ill health for those working in the NHS, local authorities and the wider public and voluntary sector
 - **health technologies** – guidance on the use of new and existing medicines, treatments and procedures within the NHS
 - **clinical practice** – guidance on the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS.