



**National Institute for
Health and Clinical Excellence**

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PRESS RELEASE

NICE guidance on bortezomib (Velcade) is a win-win solution for multiple myeloma patients and the NHS

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has today published final guidance to the NHS in England and Wales on the use of bortezomib (Velcade) for the treatment of multiple myeloma. The guidance confirms the response-rebate scheme which will allow patients at first relapse who show a full or partial response to bortezomib to carry on with the treatment, fully funded by the NHS, and patients who show no or minimal response to be taken off the drug and the drug costs refunded by the drug's manufacturer.

Andrew Dillon, NICE Chief Executive, said: "Providing expensive new cancer drugs is a challenge for the NHS, particularly when it is not possible to identify those patients who will benefit most from treatment. The scheme proposed by the manufacturer and amended by NICE will ensure that patients at first relapse, who have had one prior therapy and who have had or are unsuitable for a bone marrow transplantation will get the chance to see if the drug works well for them. This is a win-win situation for patients and the NHS."

The Department of Health and the drug's manufacturer, Janssen- Cilag, will be responsible for setting up the scheme and have agreed that it will remain in place until the next review of bortezomib by NICE, which is scheduled to be considered in September 2010.

Ends

Notes to Editors heading

About NICE

1. 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.
2. 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.

About the guidance

3. The guidance on the use of bortezomib to treat multiple myeloma is available on the NICE website at www.nice.org.uk/TA129
4. The Department of Health and the manufacturer will be writing to the NHS with details of the scheme and how it will operate.