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### **PRESS RELEASE**

## **NICE recommends rituximab for aggressive non-Hodgkin's lymphoma**

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence has issued guidance on the use of rituximab (Mabthera) for the treatment of aggressive non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. The guidance recommends that:

- Rituximab is used in combination with CHOP chemotherapy in the first line treatment of people with CD20-positive diffuse large-B-cell lymphoma that is at stage 2, 3 or 4.
- Rituximab is not used in the treatment of people who cannot have CHOP chemotherapy.
- Rituximab for the treatment of people in stage 1 of diffuse large-B-cell lymphoma is used only as part of a clinical trial because its clinical and cost effectiveness has not been established.
- A lymphoma specialist should supervise treatment with rituximab.

**Andrew Dillon, Chief Executive said,** "This type of lymphoma can spread quickly through the body, however prompt treatment is often successful. Our recommendations on the use of rituximab for aggressive non-Hodgkin's lymphoma means there are now clear standards for the NHS in England and Wales on how they should be using this treatment."

## Notes to Editors

### Q&A's and further information

1. A media briefing is available to support this press release. If you received this press release by e-mail it is attached. If you would like to receive a copy by e-mail or fax - please contact NICE on the numbers above, it is also available on the NICE website at <http://www.nice.org.uk/cat.asp?c=86763>. The full guidance is available on the NICE website at <http://www.nice.org.uk/cat.asp?c=86763>.

### About NICE

2. NICE is part of the NHS. It is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on treatments and care for those using the NHS in England and Wales. Its guidance is for healthcare professionals and patients and their carers to help them make decisions about treatment and healthcare. For further information about NICE you can visit [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk).

3. NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:

- the use of new and existing medicines and treatments within the NHS in England and Wales – technology appraisals
- the appropriate treatment and care of patients with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS in England and Wales – clinical guidelines.
- whether interventional procedures used for diagnosis or treatment are safe enough and work well enough for routine use– interventional procedures.

NICE also funds three enquiries that undertake research into the way patients are treated to identify ways of improving the quality of care (the investigations are known as confidential enquiries).

3. NICE guidance and recommendations are prepared by independent groups that include professionals working in the NHS and people who are familiar with the issues affecting patients and carers.

### About technology appraisals

4. Technology appraisals are recommendations on the use of new and existing medicines and treatments within the NHS in England and Wales, such as:

- medicines (for example, drugs)
- medical devices (for example, hearing aids or inhalers)
- diagnostic techniques (tests used to identify diseases)
- surgical procedures (for example, repairing hernias)
- health promotion activities (for example, patient education models for diabetes).

5. Our technology appraisal recommendations are prepared by an independent Committee, who include healthcare professionals working in the NHS and people who are familiar with the issues affecting patients and carers. The Committee considers the evidence on the clinical and cost effectiveness of the technology – this includes hearing the views of, and evidence from, clinical health professionals, experts and patients.

6. NHS organisations in England and Wales have to make the resources and facilities available to enable NICE guidance to be implemented. In January 2002 the Government announced a legal obligation for the NHS to provide funding for treatments and drugs recommended by NICE as a part of its technology appraisals work programme