

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

HEALTH TECHNOLOGY APPRAISAL PROGRAMME

Equality impact assessment – Guidance development

STA - Deuruxolitinib for treating severe alopecia areata [ID6597]

The impact on equality has been assessed during this appraisal according to the principles of the NICE equality scheme.

Final draft guidance

(when no draft guidance was issued)

1. Have the potential equality issues identified during the scoping process been addressed by the committee, and, if so, how?

At scoping consultation, stakeholders suggested that alopecia areata (AA) is more common in those of Asian background and people from the most deprived and urban areas, but referral to secondary care may be lower in these groups.

Stakeholders added that beard hair loss can have additional implications for people from some religious faiths, e.g. for some people from the Sikh and Jewish faiths.

It was also suggested that some health-related quality of life measures may not adequately capture the impact of living with health conditions in older people (questions about work, studying, sport) or those who are not in a relationship (question about sexual activity); they may also not capture anxiety and depression across all groups – two parameters that are commonly and negatively influenced by AA. Additionally, they may discriminate against those who are non-native English speakers.

It was also suggested that alexithymia, which is considered potentially a form of neurodiversity, has been reported in people with severe alopecia areata. They noted that some people with alopecia areata may not be able to communicate clearly the impact of their condition or needs, adding that they should be supported with treatment options that are accessible, effective and convenient.

Stakeholders also noted the fact that access to funding for wigs and other tools to change appearance is highly inconsistent across England.

Finally, stakeholders asked to include issues raised during the appraisal of ritlecitinib including:

- People with alopecia areata may be more affected by the impact of hair loss due to the religious significance of hair.
- Severe alopecia areata can have a particularly high impact on psychosocial health and quality of life for young people.

The final guidance for the appraisal of ritlecitinib also notes that severe alopecia areata is associated with severe physical disfigurement. Severe physical disfigurement is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

The recommendation includes use of deuruxolitinib for any adults with severe alopecia areata (within its marketing authorisation) and does not restrict based on ethnicity, religious belief or age.

2. Have any other potential equality issues been raised in the submissions, expert statements or academic report, and, if so, how has the committee addressed these?

N/A

3. Have any other potential equality issues been identified by the committee, and, if so, how has the committee addressed these?

N/A

4. Do the recommendations make it more difficult in practice for a specific group to access the technology compared with other groups? If so, what are the barriers to, or difficulties with, access for the specific group?

No

5. Is there potential for the recommendations to have an adverse impact on people with disabilities because of something that is a consequence of the disability?

No

6. Are there any recommendations or explanations that the committee could make to remove or alleviate barriers to, or difficulties with, access identified in questions 4 or 5, or otherwise fulfil NICE's obligations to promote equality?

N/A

7. Have the committee's considerations of equality issues been described in the final draft guidance, and, if so, where?

No, as cost-comparison appraisal.

Approved by Principal Technical Adviser (name): Lizzie Walker

Date: 19/06/2026