
National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

Febuxostat for the management of hyperuricaemia in patients with gout

Royal College of Nursing

Introduction

With a membership of over 400,000 registered nurses, midwives, health visitors, nursing students, health care assistants and nurse cadets, the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) is the voice of nursing across the UK and the largest professional union of nursing staff in the world. RCN members work in a variety of hospital and community settings in the NHS and the independent sector. The RCN promotes patient and nursing interests on a wide range of issues by working closely with the Government, the UK parliaments and other national and European political institutions, trade unions, professional bodies and voluntary organisations.

Appraisal Consultation Document – RCN Response

The Royal College of Nursing welcomes the opportunity to review the Appraisal Consultation Document (ACD) of the technology appraisal of Febuxostat for the management of hyperuricaemia in patients with gout. The RCN's response is set out under the following headings:

i) **Has the relevant evidence has been taken into account?**

There are some limitations in acquiring the patient's perceptions of the consequences of poorly treated gout. For example for those who are unable to take current treatment options - in terms of level of pain, disability and aspects of frequent admissions to hospital, this has a significant social and psychological impact. This is particularly the case for those with poorly controlled gout who may suffer very severe pain and take some time following such an exacerbation to return to normality and independence.

- ii) **Are the summaries of clinical and cost effectiveness reasonable interpretations of the evidence, and are the preliminary views on the resource impact and implications for the NHS appropriate?**

Yes, we consider the clinical and cost effectiveness interpretations of the evidence reasonable, but this comment should be taken in the context of our statement in (i) above.

- iii) **Are the provisional recommendations of the Appraisal Committee sound and do they constitute a suitable basis for the preparation of guidance to the NHS?**

Although we recognize the limitations and lack of knowledge in specific areas of care, it is chiefly because there have been many suboptimal therapies in managing a small group of difficult to manage patients with gout. If we are to gain greater insight and improve patients' long term outcomes, the opportunity within a clear criteria/framework for prescribing should be considered to gain some real life clinical experience allowing patients to make an informed choice - of what is after all an extremely painful and disabling condition for those with poor control.

- iv) **Are there any equality related issues that need special consideration that are not covered in the ACD?**

Our nursing experience of patients who would possibly benefit from this treatment would be the complex difficulty to control the patient who has failed to gain benefit from allopurinol etc. In many, this may well be elderly and have little or no other treatment options.