NHS ENGLAND SPECIALISED SERVICES

CLINICAL PANEL REPORT

Date: 21st May 2025

Intervention: Gemcitabine-nab-paclitaxel combination chemotherapy

Indication: treatment of locally advanced non-metastatic pancreatic cancer (adults)

URN: 2423

Gateway: 2, Round 1

Programme: Cancer

CRG: Chemotherapy

Information provided to the Panel

Policy Proposition

Three Paper Summary completed by Solutions for Public Health

Clinical Priorities Advisory Group (CPAG) Summary Report

Equalities and Health Inequalities (EHIA) Assessment

Patient Impact Assessment

Blueteq® Initiation Form

Policy Working Group (PWG) Appendix

This policy proposition recommends the off-label use of gemcitabine-nab-paclitaxel (paclitaxel albumin) for adults with locally advanced, non-metastatic pancreatic cancer.

Pancreatic cancer is the 10th most common cancer in the UK and is known to have a poor prognosis. At presentation, 30-40% of pancreatic adenocarcinoma (the most common type of pancreatic cancer) are locally advanced and inoperable, even though they have not metastasised yet. This is collectively referred to as locally, advanced non-metastatic pancreatic cancer (LANPC). These cancers can be very aggressive locally and spread in and around the pancreas, and may obstruct local vital structures, such as blood vessels.

For LANPC, surgery is usually not possible due to the size and/or location of the tumour and chemotherapy is the mainstay of treatment. The modified FOLFIRINOX regime is the most common combination chemotherapy regime offered to this cohort of patients, and this is made up of three different chemotherapy drugs. The modified FOLFIRINOX regime is intensive for patients, and the high toxicity often results in hospital admissions and dose reductions/treatment cessation, and this impacts patients' prognosis.

This policy proposition recommends the use of gemcitabine-nab-paclitaxel as an alternative to modified FOLFIRINOX as this combination is considered to be less toxic and can be given in fewer and shorter hospital appointments. Currently, gemcitabine-nab-paclitaxel is only licensed for metastatic pancreatic cancer and commissioned (NICE TA476) for metastatic pancreatic cancer when gemcitabine monotherapy would otherwise be used. It is estimated that approximately 75-100 patients a month in England access this treatment.

The three-paper summary was completed and included two randomised controlled trials of patients who either had gemcitabine-nab-paclitaxel or modified FOLFIRINOX, and a single-arm prospective study of patients with LANPC treated with gemcitabine-nab-paclitaxel alone. Panel members did note that a three-paper summary does not report on the certainty of the evidence and an Evidence to Decision document is not produced, making the consideration of the evidence more limited.

Study outcomes were presented to Panel members. Overall, the papers demonstrated a reduction in side effects, and one study reported that diarrhoea and anorexia were less frequent in patients when treated with gemcitabine plus nab-paclitaxel compared to FOLFIRINOX.

The proposition and the supporting documentation were also presented to Clinical Panel members. Some points for amendment were identified to use consistent terminology for gemcitabine-nab paclitaxel across documents.

EHIA – a request was made to standardise the terminology used for gemcitabine-nab paclitaxel.
PIA – no amendments requested.

Recommendation

Clinical Panel recommends that this proposition progresses as a routine commissioning policy proposition.

Why the panel made these recommendations

Panel members supported the proposition, and particularly the improvements in less side effects experienced by patients that were reported across the studies.

Documentation amendments required

Standardise the terminology used for gemcitabine-nab paclitaxel in the EHIA, Blueteq® Form and policy documents.

Declarations of Interest of Panel Members: None received

Panel Chair: Anthony Kessel, Deputy National Medical Director (Specialised Services)

2423: Gemcitabine-Nab-Paclitaxel combination chemotherapy for the treatment of locally advanced non-metastatic pancreatic cancer (adults) [2432]: List of May Clinical Panel Requested Amendments and Policy Working Group (PWG) responses

Policy proposition		
Panel comment	**Amendment**	**Page number (if applicable)**
Standardise the terminology used for gemcitabine-nab paclitaxel in the EHIA, Blueteq® Form and policy documents.	The term ‘paclitaxel albumin’ has been used throughout the policy documents, rather than ‘nab-paclitaxel' as this describes the product and is more widely used. As a result, the title of the policy has been updated to reflect this.	**N/A**