CONSUMER PRESS RELEASE

MORE PEOPLE LIVING WITH SEVERE CHRONIC INFLAMMATORY BACK PAIN TO BE GIVEN ACCESS TO BIOLOGICAL TREATMENTS, INCLUDING ABBVIE’S HUMIRA (ADALIMUMAB)

- Expanded recommendations now include an additional type of chronic inflammatory back pain meaning more people will have access to biological treatments
- Chronic inflammatory back pain is usually diagnosed in young adults and can affect sleep, everyday activities and professional life, sometimes leading to patients having to leave work entirely
- It is essential that patients are diagnosed early and receive the right treatment to help prevent irreversible damage to the spine

Maidenhead, Berkshire, 2 February 2016 – New recommendations mean that more patients with diseases causing inflammatory back pain will have access to biological treatment. This expands on previous guidance which only recommended biological treatment for one condition, Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS) and now includes another associated disease, non-radiographic-axial spondyloarthritis (nr-AxSpA).

The new recommendations were issued by National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE), the body that publishes guidelines on the use of medicines in England and Wales. Biologics are medicines which contain active substances made by or derived from a biological source. NICE reviewed studies which demonstrate that treatment with biologics can reduce disease activity and damage, improving physical function in patients living with these conditions.

Patients will have access to an alternative choice of biologics if the response to the first is not adequate.

“We are delighted to have improved access to treatment, something which we have campaigned for over many months. This is really important for people living with a chronic inflammatory back condition who suffer from debilitating pain that impacts their home, social and professional lives,” said Debbie Cook, Chief Executive, National Ankylosing Spondylitis Society. “We hope that the recommendations will enable broader and earlier access to biological medicines, taking into account other associated inflammatory conditions and allowing people to have more say in their treatment”.

Date of Preparation: Feb 2016
AXHUR151764a
Both nr-axSpA and AS come under the umbrella of the condition Axial Spondyloarthritis (axSpA), which causes inflammation of the spine and sometimes the pelvic joint, leading to pain, stiffness and reduced mobility.\textsuperscript{1,2} This can become increasingly severe over time, causing long term damage and disability.\textsuperscript{1,2}

“The new recommendations represent a significant step forward in the treatment of chronic inflammatory back pain. The inclusion of nr-AxSpA in the guidelines means that people living with the condition will now be able to access these important medicines, increasing the treatment options available to them,” said Dr Raj Sengupta, Consultant Rheumatologist, R&D Director and Lead Consultant for Ankylosing Spondylitis at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases, Bath. “It is important to select the correct treatment first time around, and when deciding on this it is vital to consider other inflammatory conditions and take into account the needs of each patient by discussing their options with them.”

In 50\% of people the disease manifests outside joints as other disorders.\textsuperscript{1} NICE recommends that people with axSpA should be treated more holistically, taking into account any other associated inflammatory conditions such as inflammatory bowel disease and psoriasis.\textsuperscript{1} The choice of treatment should be made after discussion with patients on the best option for them.\textsuperscript{1}

“The news that NICE has recommended TNF inhibitors for patients with severe axial SpA represents a new milestone in the management of this chronic disabling condition”, said Dr Karl Gaffney, Consultant Rheumatologist and Clinical Director in Norwich and Medical Advisor to NASS. “Unfortunately many patients are diagnosed very late so the next big challenge is to improve this in order to achieve better outcomes”

-ENDS-

Media contact:

Freeha Rafiq
Senior Brand Communications and Patient Relations Manager, Rheumatology
AbbVie UK
+44 (0) 7786 020398
freeha.rafiq@abbvie.com
Notes to Editors

Mechanical or Inflammatory back pain?
60-80% of the UK population will report back pain at some point in their lives. Of patients presenting to the GP surgery with chronic back pain, 5% will have inflammatory back pain.

About Axial Spondyloarthritis
Axial spondylo-arthritis (AxSpA) is an umbrella term for two conditions that cause inflammatory back pain, ankylosing spondylitis (AS) and non-radiographic axial spondylo-arthritis (nr-axSpA). This is a form of inflammatory arthritis in which joints of the spine become inflamed, often leading to stiffness and pain in the back.

In AS the damage to the spine and joints of the hips from this condition can be seen upon X-ray. However, sometimes patients may experience pain, even though doctors are unable to see any inflammation on an X-ray, this is known as nr-axSpA. In this case MRI scans are used to look at the joints.

AxSpA is as common as rheumatoid arthritis and typically develops in people aged 20-30. The disease affects many people’s ability to work and this early age of onset consequentially leads to considerable lifetime socioeconomic impacts. The condition can also significantly affect patients’ quality of life and their mental health, with 50% of people with AS concerned about their future.

Diagnosis can be delayed due to low awareness among physicians, lack of specific clinical symptoms and difficulties in differentiating the disease from mechanical back pain.

About adalimumab

Ankylosing spondylitis (AS)
Adalimumab is indicated for the treatment of adults with severe active ankylosing spondylitis who have had an inadequate response to conventional therapy.

Axial spondyloarthritis without radiographic evidence of AS
Humira is indicated for the treatment of adults with severe axial spondyloarthritis without radiographic evidence of AS but with objective signs of inflammation by elevated CRP and/or MRI, who have had an inadequate response to, or are intolerant to nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.

A list of additional indications for HUMIRA® can be found here: http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/21201

Date of Preparation: Feb 2016
AXHUR151764a
AbbVie is a global, research-based biopharmaceutical company formed in 2013 following separation from Abbott Laboratories. The company’s mission is to use its expertise, dedicated people and unique approach to innovation to develop and market advanced therapies that address some of the world’s most complex and serious diseases. Together with its wholly-owned subsidiary, Pharmacyclics, AbbVie employs more than 28,000 people worldwide and markets medicines in more than 170 countries. For further information on the company and its people, portfolio and commitments, please visit www.abbvie.co.uk.

References

1. NICE. TNF-alpha inhibitors for ankylosing spondylitis and non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis (including a review of TA143 and TA233). (2015)