

DEPARTMENT OF HAEMATO-ONCOLOGY

The Royal Marsden Hospital
Downs Road
Suton
SM2 5PT



Gareth J Morgan PhD FRCP, FRCPATH
Professor of Haematology

Ref: GM/gn

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Mr Reetan Patel
Project Manager
71 High Holborn
LONDON WC1V 6NA

Dear Mr Patel

Health Technology Appraisal – Bortezomib monotherapy for relapsed myeloma

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment on the latest developments in the Velcade appraisal. I welcome the decision to refer the Velcade PAD back to the Appraisal Committee. I think this represents a clear acceptance of the fact that an appraisal of the single agent use of Velcade in the face of its clinical use as a combination with Dexamethasone is perverse. In view of this observation I find the suggestion that the NICE Panel issue a final appraisal on the use of single agent Velcade with a plan to revisit its use as combination in the future as being equally perverse.

At this point in time, the Panel have the majority of data that is available for the use of Velcade as a single agent and in combination. Consequently it would take them little time to update their database, and to carry out an appropriate analysis of the use of Velcade combinations, in particular Velcade/Dexamethasone. We await with interest the result of this analysis, especially the patients for whom it represents an important advance.

To issue advice on the use of single agent Velcade at this time would send out a wrong message to the PCTs, who would undoubtedly interpret it as being a reason not to make Velcade available, and it would then restrict the prescribing of this important drug for the management of myeloma. It is important that we do not send this message and make available the updated analysis of the use of Velcade combinations as soon as is possible.

With kind regards

Gareth Morgan, PhD, FRCP, FRCPATH
Professor of Haematology and Head of Unit
Department of Haemato-Oncology