

PRESS RELEASE

NICE recommends aripiprazole for schizophrenia in young people

In final guidance published today, 26 January, NICE has recommended aripiprazole (Abilify, Bristol-Myers Squibb and Otsuka Pharmaceuticals) as an option for the treatment of schizophrenia in people aged 15 to 17 years who are intolerant of risperidone, or for whom risperidone is contraindicated, or whose schizophrenia has not been adequately controlled with risperidone.

Dr Carole Longson, Health Technology Evaluation Centre Director at NICE

said: “Young people diagnosed with schizophrenia are usually treated with atypical antipsychotics at a low dose and are closely monitored. The choice of treatment depends on a number of factors¹, and risperidone is currently the most widely used first-line antipsychotic treatment. The Committee felt that people who were unable to take risperidone may benefit from aripiprazole. We are pleased to be able to recommend another treatment option for young people with this debilitating condition which will help them with schizophrenia have greater control over their condition and support them in returning to previous normal functioning in terms of attending school or work.”

Ends

Notes to Editors

About the guidance

1. Further information on this appraisal is available on the NICE website at: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/TA213
2. Aripiprazole has demonstrated short and long-term efficacy in adolescents aged 15 to 17 years. The Department of Health’s remit for this appraisal was for the treatment of schizophrenia in adolescents aged 15 to 17 years (in line with the marketing

¹ Including adverse events associated with the treatment, previous treatments the person has received and the responses to them, and adverse events experienced while on those treatments.

authorisation). Consideration of the population with schizophrenia aged 18 years and older was outside the remit of this appraisal. The NICE clinical guideline on schizophrenia (March 2009) covers the care, treatment and support that adults (aged 18 and older) with schizophrenia should be offered.

About NICE

3. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance and standards on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health
4. NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:
 - **public health** – guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention of ill health for those working in the NHS, local authorities and the wider public and voluntary sector
 - **health technologies** – guidance on the use of new and existing medicines, treatments, medical technologies (including devices and diagnostics) and procedures within the NHS
 - **clinical practice** – guidance on the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS.
5. NICE produces standards for patient care:
 - **quality standards** – these reflect the very best in high quality patient care, to help healthcare practitioners and commissioners of care deliver excellent services
 - **Quality and Outcomes Framework** – NICE develops the clinical and health improvement indicators in the QOF, the Department of Health scheme which rewards GPs for how well they care for patients
6. NICE provides advice and support on putting NICE guidance and standards into practice through its **implementation programme**, and it collates and accredits high quality health guidance, research and information to help health professionals deliver the best patient care through **NHS Evidence**.