Bevacizumab in combination with gemcitabine and carboplatin for treating recurrent advanced ovarian cancer [ID490]

Target Ovarian Cancer is very disappointed that NICE were unable to approve bevacizumab in combination with gemcitabine and carboplatin for treating women with recurrent advanced ovarian cancer.

Recurrent ovarian cancer poses a particular challenge for those living with the disease. Women live under the shadow of subsequent recurrence and further treatment. Bevacizumab represents a step wise change in the treatment of ovarian cancer offering women the chance to extend their progression free survival (PFS) period, and therefore the length of time during which they are not receiving debilitating chemotherapy treatment. The PFS period is extremely valuable in helping women adjust emotionally to their recurrent cancer diagnosis and also recover physically from the impact of treatment.

Women living with ovarian cancer are justifiably upset and disappointed by the lack of availability of bevacizumab; and feel that the quality of their life is perceived as holding little value. This sense of frustration is only set to increase with the uncertainty surrounding the future of the Cancer Drugs Fund, which up until now has been valuable in helping clinician's access bevacizumab on behalf of their patients. The use of bevacizumab represents the most significant advance in treatment for ovarian cancer in twenty years. If routine NHS access to this drug cannot be given, what hope is there for any future new treatments of which there are almost none on the horizon?