



Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia

15 September 2022

Mepolizumab- a GlaxoSmithKline Australia Pty Ltd product

Re: Change to PBS listing Mepolizumab Injection (Nucala®) to include use for people diagnosed with chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps.

Chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps is a condition that can greatly impact quality of life. There are treatments available for this condition but for some, the treatments are ineffective or only short lived. The listing of mepolizumab on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) would offer these patients hope for an improvement in their debilitating condition.

Patients with chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps have often endured years of different treatments including nasal sprays, oral medication, and even nasal polyp surgery, only to have the polyps regrow and the symptoms recur. The signs and symptoms include a runny nose, persistent congestion, postnasal drip, reduced sense of smell and taste, headache, toothache, facial pain, bad breath and/or bad taste in the mouth, snoring, and nosebleeds. Potential complications include obstructive sleep apnoea, asthma flares and recurrent sinus infections. It can result in poor sleep, reduced productivity at work or school, reduced mood, and self-esteem issues.

Often this condition is associated with allergic conditions and these patients may be under the care of both a specialist clinical immunologist/allergist as well as an Ear Nose and Throat surgeon. Many have endured repeated nasal polyp removal surgeries. The requirement for repeated surgery is associated with the risk of complications that is present for any surgical procedure, as well as the monetary cost of the surgery and the recovery time off work. Many patients have also tried multiple different costly medical therapies. These patients have a reduced quality of life due to their condition, and they also have the added financial burden of using these less successful medical therapies. Until now, the medical therapies have mainly consisted of intranasal and oral corticosteroids, allergen immunotherapy and antibiotics. There are well documented risks associated with long term oral corticosteroid and antibiotic use.

If people continue to have their lives impacted by chronic sinusitis and nasal polyps, and there is a treatment that has been used successfully for other allergic conditions that may give them some relief, we believe the medication should be PBS listed to afford them the possibility of having it prescribed at reasonable cost. This drug has been well researched and is already listed on the PBS for other conditions, including severe eosinophilic asthma where it has been successful in improving patients' quality of life. We ask that those patients with chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps are given the same opportunity to access this medication if their treating clinical immunology/allergy specialist, ENT surgeon or respiratory physician think it may offer them some relief. As Mepolizumab has a different

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method of action than any other currently available treatment for this condition it may assist with improved management and therefore improve quality of life. It is important that patients and their treating doctors have a choice of treatments that best suit the disease state and the person taking it.

Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia supports the PBS listing of Mepolizumab so that people with chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps can, together with their treating medical specialist and surgeon, decide on the most appropriate treatment for them. The listing of this medication would give these people hope for a more normal enjoyable life.

Yours faithfully,

Maria Said AM
Chief Executive Officer
Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia

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