PANCREATIC CANCER PATIENTS LOSE OUT AS ABRAXANE IS TURNED DOWN BY SMC

Monday 9 June, 2014

Pancreatic Cancer Action is extremely disappointed that the advanced pancreatic cancer drug, Abraxane, has not been approved for NHS patients by the Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC).

Ali Stunt, chief executive at Pancreatic Cancer Action said: “Abraxane is a vital treatment option because it can give patients and families valuable extra time, on average an additional 2.1 months survival but in some cases, to over two years.

“Pancreatic cancer has an appalling survival rate, particularly as it is regularly diagnosed very late on when the disease has spread to other parts of the body. In addition, significant underfunding for pancreatic cancer research has meant that there has been very little in the way of improvements in survival for these patients for decades.”

In England, Abraxane has been made available to NHS patients through the Cancer Drugs Fund until a final decision is made by NICE.

Mrs Stunt continued: “The negative advice by the SMC means that eligible patients in Scotland will be denied this clinically effective treatment on the NHS, which is putting Scottish patients at a disadvantage with their English counterparts.

“It should not be down to where you live as to whether you can be treated with Abraxane for advanced pancreatic cancer. Today’s decision by the SMC is a retrograde step which defies logic.

“We hope that a future revised offer will change this outcome for patients who desperately need it.”

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