MelNet

Linking professionals in melanoma in New Zealand

11 July 2016

Geraldine MacGibbon
Senior Therapeutic Group Manager / Team Leader
PHARMAC
P O Box 10-254
Wellington
Sent by email: consult@pharmac.govt.nz

Dear Ms MacGibbon,

Consultation relating to pembrolizumab (Keytruda)

On behalf of the MelNet Executive Committee I would like to thank PHARMAC for notification of the proposal to fund pembrolizumab (Keytruda) for patients with advanced melanoma, subject to Special Authority criteria.

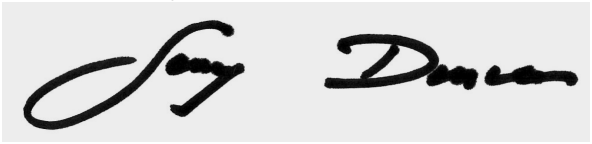
MelNet supports the proposal to list pembrolizumab (Keytruda) on the Pharmaceutical Schedule from 1 September 2016 for patients with unresectable or metastatic melanoma. Also, as with the decision to fund nivolumab (Opdivo) from 1 July, we recognise that the proposed introduction of pembrolizumab (Keytruda) throughout New Zealand so soon after funding approval will present challenges to District Health Boards in providing the resources to deliver treatment. We would be pleased to offer whatever help and support we can in addressing these challenges.

As we indicated with regard to nivolumab (Opdivo), we would like to highlight the need to maintain a robust database to ensure that the introduction of pembrolizumab (Keytruda) is adequately monitored and that the data collected are available for analysis. As we have the appropriate expertise within MelNet, we would be pleased to assist in whatever way we can with such monitoring and analysis.

With regard to the other issues for which PHARMAC is seeking feedback:

- MelNet does not hold a firm view on the proposal to amend the Special Authority criteria applying to nivolumab
- MelNet generally is supportive of "programmed cell death-1 (PD-1) inhibitors" being recognised as a therapeutic sub-group.

Yours sincerely,



Gary Duncan MBChB, FRACS
Consultant Plastic Surgeon and Chair, MelNet Executive Committee
(Electronically sighted/approved)

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