



Northern Treatment  
Advisory Group

# **Pitolisant (Wakix<sup>®</sup>) for the treatment of narcolepsy with or without cataplexy in adults**

## **NE&C Cost Analysis**

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This document should be read in conjunction with the [NICE ESNM on pitolisant](#)

## Cost analysis

The population of the North East & Cumbria (NE&C) is 3,251,470 according to UKMi Prescribing Outlook Cost Calculator 2016. N.B This doesn't take into consideration the recent boundary changes to Cumbria CCG and is likely to be a slight over estimate.

It is estimated that narcolepsy affects 0.05% of the population with approx. 31,000 cases in the UK.<sup>1</sup> For the NE&C, using the above population estimates, this equates to 1625 cases of narcolepsy.

The Pharmaceutical Company anticipate that pitolisant will be used initially for people with narcolepsy who either cannot tolerate current treatments or have not responded to these. They estimate that there are approximately 30,000 people in the UK with narcolepsy and about 5,000 of whom receive treatment. Of the treated population, they estimate that about 50% of patients may not tolerate or not respond to their existing medicines and therefore may be eligible for treatment with pitolisant. This equates to 2,500 people over a 5-year period.<sup>2</sup>

Using the estimates provided above, approximately 270 patients across the North East and Cumbria receive treatment for their narcolepsy.

Using the company's estimates, 50% of the 270 patients may be eligible for treatment with pitolisant; this equates to 135 patients across NE&C.

### **Cost of Pitolisant**

The cost of 30 days treatment with pitolisant at a dose of 4.5 mg to 36 mg once daily is £310.00 to £620.00 excluding VAT.<sup>2</sup>

**The potential cost impact of Pitolisant in the NE&C region for 135 patients is therefore £508,850 pa to £1,018,035 pa**

### **Cost of other treatments**

Other medicines licensed for use in narcolepsy include the central nervous system stimulants, modafinil and dexamfetamine, and the central nervous system depressant, sodium oxybate.

The cost of 30 days treatment with the other medicines used for narcolepsy is £6.06 to £318.24 for stimulants such as modafinil, dexamfetamine or methylphenidate and £540.00 to £1,080.00 for sodium oxybate excluding VAT.<sup>2</sup>

**The annual cost for sodium oxybate is £874,800 to £1,749,600 or £9817 to £515,549 pa for stimulants.**

### **Feedback from Specialists**

Specialists suggest that prevalence is around 1 in 2000 to 1 in 2500 but that at least 50% of patients are undiagnosed. The vast majority of patients will be on treatment with wake-promoting (stimulant) drugs and around 70% of patients with narcolepsy will have cataplexy.

Both Specialists have experience of using pitolisant and state that around 50% of patients who are started on it, continue using it. Patients are reviewed after approximately one month and pitolisant is discontinued if there is no benefit.

They suggest that pitolisant would be used as a second line option for those who have failed first line stimulants or if modafinil is ineffective/not tolerated. To note that sodium oxybate is currently not recommended for use in adult patients by NTAG.

**Author's declaration:** The author has no relevant interests to declare.

### **References**

1. <https://www.sps.nhs.uk/medicines/pitolisant/> – accessed 13.4.2017
2. NICE ES8: Narcolepsy with or without cataplexy in adults: pitolisant. March 2017