



Joint statement from: British Society for Rheumatology and National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society

Date: 24/02/2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

British Society for Rheumatology and National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society express disappointment over NICE appeal rejection on disability-preventing drugs that would improve patient care

The National Institute for Health & Care Excellence (NICE) have rejected a joint BSR and NRAS appeal against the Final Appraisal Document (FAD) on biologic DMARDs used in the treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA).

The current position allows the use of biologics drugs for patients with severe disease. While BSR/NRAS support the continuing availability of biologic drugs for patients with severe disease, we are extremely disappointed that NICE, despite the overwhelming evidence and convincing appeal case, refuse to extend the limited availability asked for to patients with moderate to severe RA. This group of patients can experience the same painful and debilitating symptoms of RA and, over time, just as poor outcomes as those with 'severe' disease. This position leaves the UK lagging behind Western Europe where there is greater access to these drugs.

We reiterate that we believe there is no economic or clinical justification for this to continue as the NICE Appraisal Consultation Document showed that the formula used to demonstrate cost-effectiveness for the NHS gave very similar results for both severe and moderate patient groups.

Professor Simon Bowman, President of BSR said “The clinical community remains frustrated that in this country we still fall behind other comparable European countries in the modern treatment of rheumatoid arthritis despite evidence to support prescribing of biologic drugs for those with so-called ‘moderate disease’. These patients still develop joint damage and disability that in many cases can be prevented by biologic therapies. To exclude these patients from access to these drugs is a false economy that has wider impacts on the individuals, their employers, the entire NHS system and has a direct cost to the exchequer.”

Ailsa Bosworth, Chief Executive of NRAS added “The impact on patients’ lives of this negative outcome is significant. It is particularly disappointing given that we and the BSR were not asking for all patients in the moderate – severe group to be given access, but only those with the biomarkers which indicate poorer prognosis and outcomes. These patients will cost the NHS and society a lot more over time and it is short-sighted to refuse the most effective potential treatment to those most in need.”

- ENDS -

Notes to editors:

BSR communications:

Neil Walsh tel: +44 (0)207 842 0916

Email: nwalsh@rheumatology.org.uk

NRAS press office:

Daniela Boyd-Waters at Nobull Communications

Daniela tel: +44 (0)1628 526208

Email: daniela@nobull-communications.co.uk

About the British Society for Rheumatology:

The British Society for Rheumatology (BSR) exists to promote excellence in the treatment of people with arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions and to support

those delivering it. It is a professional association representing the whole multi-disciplinary team: consultant rheumatologists, trainees, specialised nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, psychologists and GPs with special interest in rheumatology. BSR aims to improve standards of care in rheumatology and secure a high priority for rheumatology services.

About NRAS

NRAS is the only UK charity specifically devoted to supporting adults and their families living with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) and children, young people and their families affected by Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA) and the health professionals treating RA and JIA.

We provide a wide range of patient services including information/publications, websites, peer support, helpline, advocacy, campaigning and community groups and everything we do supports a strong belief in the importance of supported self-management strategies, which incorporate care and support planning and shared decision making, underpinning best evidenced based care for all.

Copyright © 2016 The British Society for Rheumatology, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this email as a member of the media interested in health.

Our mailing address is:

The British Society for Rheumatology
Bride House
18-20 Bride Lane
LONDON, England EC4Y 8EE
United Kingdom

[Add us to your address book](#)

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)