DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
DRUG OFFICE
DRUG REGISTRATION AND
IMPORT/EXPORT CONTROL DIVISION
3/F., Public Health Laboratory Centre,
382 Nam Cheong Street, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Tel. No.: 2319 8458
Enquiries (852) 2319 8458
Faxline No. (852)2803 4962
OUR REF.: DH DO PRIE/7-30/15

13 November 2015

Dear Healthcare Professionals,

Crizotinib (Xalkori): risk of cardiac failure

Your attention is drawn to the Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency’s (MHRA) announcement on the risk of cardiac failure associated with the use of crizotinib.

There have been reports of severe, sometimes fatal, cases of cardiac failure in patients treated with crizotinib. A review by European medicines regulators of data from clinical trials and reports from clinical practice has concluded that this side effect is common (ie, occurs in between 1 in 10 and 1 in 100 patients who take crizotinib).

Up to 25 February 2015, about 14,700 patients worldwide have received crizotinib since licensing. Forty cases of cardiac failure have been reported in the post-marketing setting. In most cases cardiac failure occurred within 1 month of starting treatment with crizotinib, and affected patients with or without pre-existing heart disorders. The reports included some cases with evidence of symptoms of cardiac failure resolving on stopping crizotinib, and cases with evidence of symptoms reoccurring when it was reintroduced.

In the UK, the MHRA has received 2 Yellow Card reports of suspected heart failure with crizotinib up to 3 November 2015, 1 of which was fatal.

The MHRA advises healthcare professionals of the following:

- Monitor all patients for signs and symptoms of heart failure (including dyspnoea, oedema, or rapid weight gain from fluid retention)
- Consider reducing the dose, or interrupting or stopping treatment if symptoms of heart failure occur

Please refer to the MHRA’s website for details:

In Hong Kong, there are two pharmaceutical products containing crizotinib, namely Xalkori Cap 200mg (HK-61969) and 250mg (HK-61968) registered by Pfizer Corporation Hong Kong Limited (Pfizer HK). Both products are prescription-only medicines and are indicated for the treatment of patients with previously-treated locally advanced or metastatic non-small-cell lung cancer (NSCLC) that is anaplastic lymphoma kinase (ALK)-positive. Their package inserts do not have warnings on cardiac failure. So far, the Department of Health (DH) has received four adverse drug reaction cases related to crizotinib, and none of them was related to cardiac failure.

According to the Dear Healthcare Professional Letter in the MHRA announcement, Pfizer UK Ltd would include the new warnings to the Summary of Product Characteristics of the products in UK. DH will contact Pfizer HK to follow up. In view of the MHRA announcement, the issue will be discussed by the Registration Committee of the Pharmacy and Poisons Board. Healthcare professionals are advised to balance the risk of possible adverse effects against the benefit of treatment.

We build a healthy Hong Kong and aspire to be an internationally renowned public health authority

DH 11088A
Please report any adverse events caused by drugs to the Pharmacovigilance Unit of the DH (tel. no.: 2319 2920, fax: 2319 6319 or email: adr@dh.gov.hk). For details, please refer to the website at Drug Office under “ADR Reporting”: http://www.drugoffice.gov.hk/adr.html. You may wish to visit the Drug Office's website for subscription and browsing of "Drug News" which is a monthly digest of drug safety news and information issued by Drug Office.

Yours faithfully,

Yours faithfully,

P.P. (Grant NG)

for Assistant Director (Drug)