



## NCPE Plain English Summary

**Drug name:** trastuzumab emtansine (*pronounced: tras-TOO-zoo-mab em-TAN-seen*) for the treatment of early forms of HER2-positive breast cancer, in patients who still have disease remaining at surgery, after receiving pre-operative treatment.

**Brand name:** Kadcyła®

### What is the NCPE?

The National Centre for Pharmacoeconomics (NCPE) is a team of experts who look at the health benefits and costs of medicines. The HSE asks us to advise on whether or not a new medicine is good value for money. We give unbiased advice to help the HSE provide the most effective, safe and cost-effective (value for money) treatments for patients.

### How do we make our recommendations?

Our main focus is on the health benefits and cost effectiveness of a medicine. We look at the wider costs and health benefits associated with a new medicine, for example:

- Does the new medicine work better than other treatments available in Ireland?
- Is the new medicine easier to give or easier to take compared with other treatments available in Ireland?
- Does the new medicine reduce the need for patients to be hospitalised?
- Does the new medicine improve the quality of a patient's life over other treatments available in Ireland?
- Will the new medicine save resources elsewhere within the health system?

We review the information from clinical trials along with the cost and value for money data presented by the pharmaceutical company. We ask doctors and other healthcare professionals for advice about any health benefits of the new medicine compared with current treatments. We also ask patient organisations to send us their views on how the new drug may improve patients' day-to-day experience of living with a disease.

### **What is trastuzumab emtansine used for?**

Trastuzumab emtansine is a cancer medicine used to treat patients with early breast cancer (cancer that has not spread to other parts of the body) who have been treated with anti-cancer medicines before they undergo cancer surgery (often called neoadjuvant therapy). Trastuzumab emtansine can only be used in patients where there are remaining cancer cells found at the time of surgery.

Trastuzumab emtansine can only be used when the cancer has been shown to 'overexpress HER2': this means that the cancer cell produces on its surface large quantities of a protein which stimulates the growth of the cancer cell and is called HER2 (human epidermal growth factor).

### **What recommendation has the NCPE made to the HSE?**

We have recommended that the HSE should consider funding trastuzumab emtansine if cost effectiveness (value for money) can be improved. The HSE will consider our recommendation and make the final decision about reimbursement (funding). When making the funding decision, the HSE will also consider the additional [criteria](#) outlined in the Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013.

### **Why did we make this recommendation?**

After reviewing the data presented by the pharmaceutical company, we concluded that the HSE consider providing trastuzumab emtansine if the HSE can agree a suitable price reduction with the pharmaceutical company. We believe the medicine may work as well or better than other ways to manage this condition. However, the price of the medicine is too high compared with other ways to manage this condition, and we believe that the medicine is not value for money.

The HSE considers a number of factors along with our recommendation when deciding whether to provide this medicine. These factors are listed in the Health (Pricing and Supply of Medical Goods) Act 2013.

### **Next steps**

When the HSE receives our recommendation, it will look at all the relevant data about trastuzumab emtansine. The HSE makes the final decision on reimbursement.

### Where can I get more information?

You can get more information about trastuzumab emtansine from the following online options:

- the NCPE Technical Summary Document
- Kadcyla European Public Assessment Report (EPAR) – [Summary for the public](#)  
or
- searching for trastuzumab emtansine on our website ([www.ncpe.ie](http://www.ncpe.ie));
- searching for trastuzumab emtansine on the European Medicines Agency (EMA) website ([www.ema.europa.eu](http://www.ema.europa.eu)).

Please refer to the NCPE website for updated information on the reimbursement status of this medicine.

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