

Client: Myeloma UK Yellow News
Source: The Times (Ireland)
Date: 04/11/2015

Keyword: Eric Low
Page: 20
Reach: 2874
Size: 88
Value: 2682.24



Blood cancer plea

Sir, As an alliance of blood cancer charities, and on behalf of the 27,000 blood cancer patients and their families who have signed a petition against the delisting of life-saving drugs from the cancer drugs fund (CDF), we are concerned over the government's failure on the fund.

The CDF is substantially overspent and no data has been collected on whether or not any CDF-funded treatments have actually worked. The government has let it progress to the point where 12 clinically effective blood cancer drug indications may today be removed without a long-term solution to access.

While the CDF has improved access to cancer drugs not routinely available in NHS England, it was always intended to be a temporary solution while a long-term pricing mechanism was worked out. The proposed consultation on the CDF has taken too long to materialise, and as the new CDF system is set to be in place from April 2016, the time is rapidly decreasing for stakeholders to shape a system that is fit for purpose.

Through the revised CDF and the "accelerated access review", there is a real opportunity to put patients at the heart of the system and ensure that they are able to access the most innovative medicines. This is an opportunity that the government can no longer afford to miss.

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