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NICE guidance confirms PleurX can benefit the lives of cancer sufferers

NICE, the healthcare guidance body has published final guidance supporting the PleurX catheter system. The report confirms that the catheter drainage system could help improve patients' quality of life and save the NHS almost £900k a year.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) recently reviewed the PleurX catheter system which is exclusively distributed in the UK by healthcare equipment company, UK Medical.

The assessment, carried out through NICE's Medical Technology Evaluation Program, concluded that the PleurX system should be considered for use in all patients with treatment-resistant recurrent malignant ascites. Ascites is the name given to the build up of excess fluid between the membranes that line the abdominal wall, and can be a symptom of different types of cancers such as ovarian cancer.

The PleurX catheter drainage system is inserted into a patient's abdominal space and enables fluid build-up to drain out into a vacuum bottle. Evidence from the NICE guidance suggested that using the PleurX system could improve patient's quality of life, reduce complications and save the NHS around £679 per patient, an annual saving of almost £900k.

The NICE guidance suggested that the lives of patients suffering from treatment-resistant ascites can be improved by the PleurX system, as the drainage of fluids can be carried out by patients at home. PleurX frees patients from the limitations of gravity drainage procedures which can take longer periods of time and restricts patient's movement.

Not only do the NICE guidelines suggest the PleurX system will improve patients' quality of life, the system is also expected to save the NHS substantial amounts of money. This cost saving comes from the fact that patients can treat themselves at home instead of in hospitals.

Consultant Radiologist, Dr Laasch, an expert PleurX advisor for the NICE review said: "We have now been able to offer PleurX drainage for treatment-resistant recurrent ascites for 3 years. It has turned out to be one of the simplest procedures that has made the biggest difference.

"It has given independence back to patients who might otherwise spend 10-15 days per month in hospital, simply to drain the accumulating fluid. Furthermore it has been an additional bonus to find that - as a new technology - it is cheaper than traditional inpatient drainage and vacates large numbers of inpatient beds for patients awaiting other treatment."

Lisa Peck, Gynaecological Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialist for 3 Counties Cancer Network uses PleurX to treat patients and said: “The insertion of semi – permanent drains for management of malignant ascites has had a huge impact on the quality of life for some of our patients. I am delighted that NICE has approved Pleurx for this purpose.”

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Words: 445

Notes to editors

About UK Medical - <http://www.ukmedical.com>

Established for over 20 years, UK Medical supplies medical products to the NHS and the private medical sector. The business is highly successful with an impressive growth record and a reputation for innovation.

UK Medical work with leading suppliers from around the world, including CareFusion, Bioteq, Cooper Surgical, Ella and Minvasys and specialise in premium quality, interventional, implantable and sophisticated single-use products, covering biopsy, cardiac, drainage, obs & gynae, stenting, surgery and vertebroplasty

About the NICE Medical Technologies Evaluation Programme- <http://www.nice.org.uk/MT>

Established by NICE in 2009, the focus of this area of work is specifically on the evaluation of innovative medical technologies, including devices and diagnostics. The types of products which might be included are medical devices that deliver treatment such as those implanted during surgical procedures, technologies that give greater independence to patients, and diagnostic devices or tests used to detect or monitor medical conditions.

The independent Medical Technology Advisory Committee (MTAC) has two core remits: selecting medical technologies for evaluation by NICE guidance programmes and also developing medical technologies guidance itself. In producing medical technology guidance, MTAC looks at whether a device offers benefits to the patient and NHS at a lower cost compared with similar products, or increased benefits for equal cost. The guidance applies to the NHS in England, and is not mandatory.

More information is available at <http://www.nice.org.uk/MT>

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