

**MYÉLOME
CANADA**



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Uniquely devoted to the Canadian myeloma community

Myeloma Canada Applauds Ontario Government's Decision to Fund Revlimid®
Toronto, ON, July 24, 2009

Ontario has become the second province, after British Columbia, to approve funding for Revlimid® (or lenalidomide) in combination with dexamethasone as second-line therapy for the treatment of the blood cancer multiple myeloma.

In October 2008, Health Canada approved Revlimid in combination with dexamethasone for the treatment of multiple myeloma patients who have received at least one other treatment regimen. Prior to the drug's approval, there were few effective, once-daily oral treatment options for patients with this aggressive blood cancer. Following the Health Canada approval, the Joint Oncology Drug Review (JODR) and other provincial funding authorities undertook a comprehensive analysis of the costs and benefits of Revlimid, ultimately leading to the positive funding decision by the Ontario government.

Outside of British Columbia and Ontario, numerous Canadian myeloma patients who require Revlimid but do not have private drug insurance are awaiting funding decisions from their respective provinces. Myeloma Canada, therefore, urges decision makers in these provinces to follow the lead set by British Columbia and Ontario in providing funding for Revlimid, immediately.

According to John Lemieux, President of Myeloma Canada, "Denying public funding for a critical drug like Revlimid effectively blocks patient access to a combination treatment of Revlimid and dexamethasone that has been proven effective against multiple myeloma. Denying access to this life-extending treatment affects patients' quality of life and life expectancy. For many, it will mean that, in the absence of other treatment alternatives, they will die sooner than would otherwise be the case. It is an unacceptable roadblock on the path to moving multiple myeloma from a fatal, incurable cancer to one that is treatable and survivable."

About Multiple Myeloma

Multiple myeloma, a cancer of the bone marrow, is an incurable but treatable disease. The cancer starts in plasma cells, which are produced in the bone marrow. In myeloma, abnormal plasma cells, called myeloma cells, grow uncontrollably, crowding out the normal blood cells in the bone. This can bring on symptoms such as fatigue, recurrent infections and severe pain resulting from bone fractures. The disease disturbs the body's balance of minerals and prevents organs, such as the kidney, as well as nerves, from functioning properly. In Canada, approximately 2,000 people are diagnosed with multiple myeloma every year.

About Myeloma Canada

Myeloma Canada, the only national organization exclusively devoted to the Canadian myeloma community, is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to supporting people living with multiple myeloma. The mission of Myeloma Canada is to: provide educational resources and support to patients, families, and caregivers; increase awareness of the disease; and promote improved access

to new therapies, treatment options, and health care resources. Myeloma Canada works with regional support groups and key myeloma experts to strengthen the voice of the Canadian myeloma community. Myeloma Canada works in close affiliation with the International Myeloma Foundation, the world's oldest and largest myeloma organization. For more information or to find out how you can help please visit our website at www.myelomacanada.ca.