



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Health  
**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

19 October 2022

**DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR**

No. 2022 - 0560

**FOR: ALL CENTERS FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT, NATIONAL DRUG POLICY COMPLIANCE OFFICES, LEAGUES OF CITIES, PROVINCES AND MUNICIPALITIES, PROFESSIONAL HEALTH SOCIETIES, DIRECTORS OF BUREAUS AND REGIONAL OFFICES, BARMM MINISTER OF HEALTH, CHIEFS OF MEDICAL CENTERS AND SANITARIA, AND OTHER CONCERNED**

**SUBJECT: Health Technology Assessment Council (HTAC) Recommendation for the Inclusion of Zoledronic Acid for Individuals with Malignancy-Related Bone Disease in the Philippine National Formulary (PNF)**

By virtue of Republic Act 11223, otherwise known as the Universal Health Care (UHC) Act, health technology assessment (HTA) shall be institutionalized as a fair and transparent priority-setting mechanism to provide financing and coverage recommendations on health technologies to be funded by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth).

Please be apprised that as of 19 October 2022, the Office of the Secretary of the DOH accepts the HTA Council recommendation to include **zoledronic acid (4mg/5mL concentrated solution for IV infusion) for individuals with malignancy-related bone disease** in the PNF, to wit:

*Based on the evidence considered, the HTAC hereby recommends the government financing of zoledronic acid (4mg/5mL concentrated solution for IV infusion) for the treatment of patients with malignancy-related bone disease through its inclusion in PNF. Currently, there are no PNF-listed drugs indicated for malignancy-related bone diseases. The basis for the HTAC recommendations are as follows:*

- 1. Zoledronic acid has comparable to better efficacy and safety profile compared to other bisphosphonates in terms of reducing the overall risk of skeletal-related events, pain, and any adverse event.*
- 2. Based on the costing analysis, the total cost of treatment for zoledronic acid is cheaper than pamidronic acid. The government will need ₱0.31 billion to implement zoledronic acid among its potential total users.*
- 3. Using the clinical outcomes from previous studies (e.g., Wong et al [2012], Rosen et al [2004], and Mhaskar et al [2012]), about ₱419,776.50 to ₱457,938.00 would be needed to administer zoledronic acid to 11-12 individuals with malignancy-related bone disease for the prevention of one incidence of skeletal-related event.*

*However, there is insufficient evidence to compare the cost-effectiveness of zoledronic acid with pamidronic acid as the currently available evidence is not applicable to the Philippine setting. Of note, zoledronic acid is cheaper than pamidronic acid, has similar efficacy, and is thus likely to be more cost-effective over the comparator.*

For more details, you may refer to the evidence summary posted on the HTA Philippines website: [https://bit.ly/HTACRecom\\_ZoledronicAcid2022](https://bit.ly/HTACRecom_ZoledronicAcid2022)

Kindly disseminate this to all concerned officials in your areas of responsibility so that they may be appropriately guided in their procurement activities. All are enjoined to ensure rational procurement, distribution, and use of health technologies in all government and private facilities.

Your full cooperation in this endeavor is expected and highly appreciated.

For your information and guidance.

By Authority of the Secretary of Health.



**ATTY. CHARADE MERCADO-GRANDE**  
OIC- Undersecretary of Health  
Health Regulation Team