CEDAC FINAL RECOMMENDATION on RECONSIDERATION and REASONS for RECOMMENDATION

ALENDRONATE/CHOLECALCIFEROL (Fosavance™ – Merck Frosst Canada Ltd.)

Description:
Fosavance™ is a fixed dose combination of alendronate, a bisphosphonate that inhibits bone resorption, and cholecalciferol (vitamin D_3). Fosavance™ is approved for the treatment of osteoporosis in men and postmenopausal women.

Dosage Forms:
Tablet containing alendronate 70 mg and cholecalciferol 70 µg (2800 IU vitamin D_3) to be taken once weekly.

Recommendation:
The Canadian Expert Drug Advisory Committee (CEDAC) recommends that Fosavance™ not be listed.

Reasons for the Recommendation:
1. The Committee considered the results of one randomized controlled trial (RCT) in 717 patients with osteoporosis which compared the fixed dose combination of alendronate 70 mg plus cholecalciferol 70 µg with alendronate 70 mg alone, each given once per week for a total of 15 weeks. The primary outcome measure was vitamin D insufficiency, defined as a serum concentrations of 25-hydroxyvitamin D of <15 ng/mL. Of those patients who had baseline levels of <15 ng/mL of 25-hydroxyvitamin D (21.5% of all patients), 84% of patients who received alendronate alone versus 38% of those who received the fixed dose combination continued to have vitamin D insufficiency at 15 weeks.

2. The effect of the fixed dose combination of alendronate and cholecalciferol in preventing bone fractures has not been studied, making it impossible for the Committee to assess the benefit to harm ratio of Fosavance™. Moreover, the effectiveness of 400 IU of cholecalciferol daily at preventing fractures is not as great as 800 IU units per day, raising more concerns about the effectiveness of this combination.

3. The fixed dose combination of alendronate and cholecalciferol in Fosavance™ dose not allow therapy to be individualized through dose titration of cholecalciferol.

4. The Committee felt that Fosavance™ offers no advantage over generic alendronate since there is no evidence that it improves clinically important outcomes in patients with osteoporosis.

Supplementation of alendronate with higher daily doses of over-the-counter vitamin D is an effective, convenient and inexpensive option.

Of Note:

1. Both published and unpublished data were reviewed and taken into consideration in making this recommendation.