Oxbryta's global exit: Pfizer withdraws sickle cell disease drug amid safety concerns

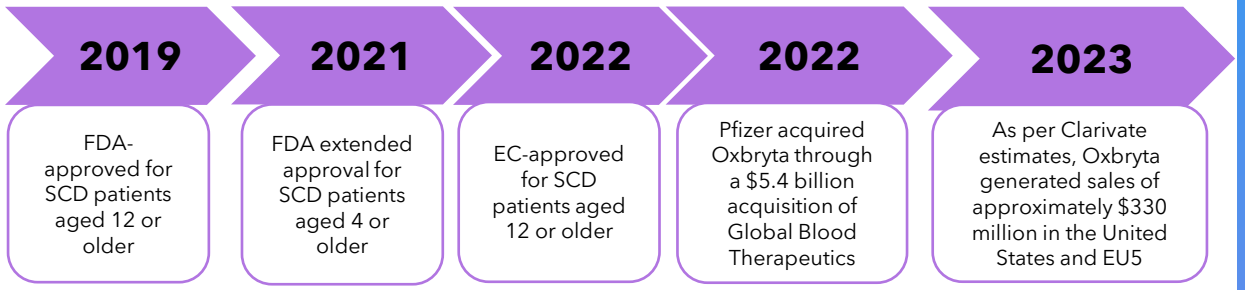
Market Event Summary

Ankita Sharma | October 2024

Oxbryta's global exit: Pfizer withdraws SCD drug amid safety concerns

Background and timeline

- **Oxbryta (voxelotor), a once-daily tablet, is used to treat hemolytic anemia caused by SCD**.



Event

- On September 25, 2024, Pfizer announced the withdrawal of Oxbryta from the global market and the halting any further clinical development of the drug. This decision was made based on the higher occurrence of vaso-occlusive crisis and deaths observed in post-marketing clinical trials.
- Following this announcement, on September 26, 2024, the CHMP recommended suspension of Oxbryta's marketing authorization. Additionally, the FDA issued an alert about Oxbryta's market withdrawal and indicated that the agency is conducting a safety review of the drug.

Clarivate's takeaways

Unmet need surges as Oxbryta's exit reshapes SCD treatment landscape

Oxbryta's withdrawal has compounded the existing high unmet need for SCD patients, especially following the withdrawal of Novartis's Adakveo (crizanlizumab) in Europe in mid-2023. These withdrawals have left a significant gap in the SCD treatment landscape, with very few options available, particularly in Europe.

Mitapivat may become an alternative to Oxbryta

Agios's mitapivat may emerge as a leading alternative for patients with hemolytic anemia in the SCD market if its ongoing Phase 3 development succeeds. Its novel mechanism, which focuses on red blood cell metabolism, distinguishes it from other treatments.

Uncertainty about therapeutics in development with a similar MOA

Pfizer's decision to halt the commercialization and clinical development of Oxbryta could negatively impact similar therapeutic approaches targeting hemoglobin binding. Pfizer's osivelotor, in Phase 2/3, has a similar MOA but higher affinity for hemoglobin than Oxbryta. The impact of Oxbryta's setback on this ongoing trial remains unclear.

About the author

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