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Cancer Drugs Fund and
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12th February 2019

Dear Professor Kröger,

Thank you to European Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation

I am writing to thank JACIE for all the work undertaken, on behalf of the European Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation, to enable the NHS to provide CAR T services to eligible patients in the UK.

As you know, NHS England's commercial deal with Novartis for the acute lymphoblastic leukaemia was the first in Europe, and came less than 10 days after the treatment was granted its European marketing authorisation. Another deal followed with Kite-Gilead for their lymphoma treatment. These deals provided an immense opportunity for NHS patients to access these innovative and potentially curative treatments and with the support from JACIE, made this a reality.

This opportunity also came with a commissioning challenge in providing access to a highly complex and disruptive innovation in a short period of time. NHS England would not have been able to overcome this challenge and provide prompt access for NHS patients without the support of JACIE.

NHS England worked closely with JACIE through the accreditation process to develop a service that is fit for purpose, high quality and equitable. A strength of the process was partnering with JACIE. The feedback from the inspections were taken on board by providers without push back. This ensured that all providers are providing a safe and high-quality service.

We would like to particularly recognise the hard work of JACIE inspectors and staff to review the applications from allogeneic transplant centres and inspect eight providers on an accelerated timeline. We understand that the JACIE accreditation process relies heavily on volunteer expert inspectors and that this work is undertaken on top of their day-to-day clinical workload. Without the inspectors going above and beyond to undertake the extra inspections in the short time period NHS patients would not be getting CAR T as quickly as they have been able to.

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Furthermore, we would like to recognise Eoin McGrath's dedication and effort to keep NHS England up to date on the status of providers as they moved through the process. This was instrumental in ensuring NHS England was aligned across the onboarding process with the companies, JACIE accreditation and the first National CAR T Clinical Panel (NCCP) for acute lymphoblastic leukaemia and NCCP for lymphoma.

We look forward to continuing our partnership as more CAR T cell therapies are potentially approved by NICE and as more providers are commissioned to provide CAR T cell therapy. Please can you pass on this feedback and our sincere thanks to all involved.

Yours sincerely

Nina Pinwill
Head of Commercial Operations, NHS England

CC: Professor John Snowden
Andreu Gusi
Eoin McGrath