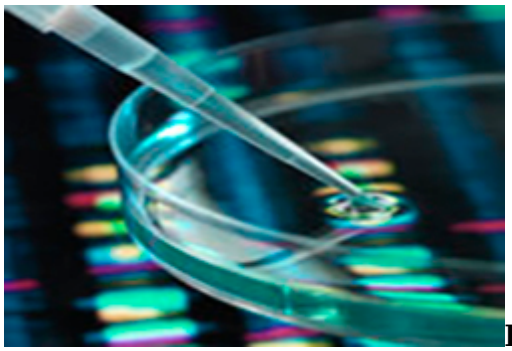
UK's Medicines Regulator Announces Guidance on the New International Recognition Procedure for the Approval of New Medicines from 1 January 2024



Background

Earlier this year, the UK's medicines regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), announced that a new International Recognition Procedure (IRP) will be put in place for the approval of new medicines from 1 January 2024. On 4 September 2023, the MHRA announced the publication of detailed **guidance** on this new procedure, which will replace the **European Commission Decision Reliance Procedure** (ECDRP). The **Decentralised and Mutual Recognition Reliance Procedure** (MRDCRP), which allows the MHRA to have regard to approvals in the EU through the decentralised and mutual recognition procedures, will be incorporated under the umbrella of the IRP.

European Commission Decision Reliance Procedure

The ECDRP was introduced post-Brexit as a temporary measure to try and ensure continued access to new medicines from the EU for patients in Great Britain until 31 December 2023.

Under the ECDRP, the MHRA may rely on a decision taken by the European Commission on the grant of a new marketing approval in the EU through the centralized procedure, in order to grant a new marketing approval in Great Britain more quickly.

International Recognition Procedure

From 1 January 2024, the MHRA will have regard to decisions already made by medicines regulators in Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, Singapore, Switzerland and the United States (Reference Regulators).

The IRP will be open to applicants that have already received a marketing approval for the same product from one of the MHRA's specified Reference Regulators. The MHRA defines "same product" as "*as having the same qualitative and quantitative composition (active substance(s) and excipients), and the same pharmaceutical form, from applicants belonging to the same company or group of companies or which are licensees.*"

There are two procedures that can be used for initial applications for a new marketing approval using the IRP:

- **Recognition A** – applications under this procedure will be approved within 60 days (excluding

clock stops), unless there are any major objections which cannot be resolved within 60 days. If this occurs, the timetable may revert to Recognition B. To qualify for this procedure, the Reference Regulator must have given approval for the product within the last two years, the manufacturing process must be unchanged and the product must not meet any of the 24 listed conditions of Recognition B.

- **Recognition B** – applications under this procedure will be approved within 110 days (excluding clock stops), unless there are any major objections at day 110. If this occurs, the timetable will then revert to 210 days and formal advice from the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use will be sought on approvability. To qualify for this procedure, the Reference Regulator must have given approval for the product within the last ten years, and at least one of 24 listed conditions must apply. The conditions include if the product is: (i) designated as an orphan medicinal product in Great Britain, (ii) an advanced therapy medicinal product, (iii) a cutting-edge technology, or (iv) a first-in-class active substance.

Practical Implications

The IRP will allow the MHRA to take into account the expertise and decision-making of trusted medicines regulators when approving a new medicine from 1 January 2024.

It is unclear if there are any specific requirements for choosing the Reference Regulator if the product is approved by more than one eligible medicines regulator.

As a final note, the IRP will sit alongside the MHRA's current national procedures. Any ECDRP and MRDCRP applications for marketing approval received by the MHRA *after* 1 January 2024 will be assessed under the new IRP. Any ECDRP and MRDCRP applications for marketing approval received by the MHRA *before* 31 December 2023 will be assessed under the current ECDRP and MRDCRP respectively.