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Uptake and Australian cohort characteristics for innovative migraine prophylactic medicines

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Abstract

Background: Monoclonal antibodies calcitonin gene-related peptide (mAbs CGRP) inhibitors provide an effective pharmacological approach to migraine prophylaxis. In Australia, the uptake and characteristics of new users are poorly understood.

Aims: This study aims to evaluate the uptake and patterns of use of CGRP inhibitors. Future research will determine patient characteristics of new users of CGRP inhibitors, including the population potentially at-risk of adverse outcomes, such as those with cardiovascular comorbidity and measure safety signals associated with use.

Methods: We examined the publicly available aggregated (de-identified) PBS data for mAbs CGRP inhibitors between 1 June 2021 and 31 May 2023. We analysed the estimates of the aggregate community use of CGRP inhibitors by calculating the dispensing volume. We further stratified the dispensing data by individual CGRP inhibitor and PBS item code (new user and continuing therapy or prevalent user).

Results: We identified a 230% increase in dispensing of galcanezumab between 2021 and 2023. Dispensing for initial treatment has declined, suggesting that the population use has stabilised. Fremanezumab, was also associated with a 700% increase in dispensing, however, use is still increasing. When examined by individual PBS streamlined authority code, it appears the introduction of pen device in 2022 for fremanezumab has led to an increase in the market as well as a shift from the syringe formulation to the pen device.

Conclusions: Migraine prophylaxis with mAbs CGRP inhibitors is increasing in Australia. We found that the use of galcanezumab while highly utilised initially has stabilised, and the introduction of a new administration device for fremanezumab has led to a shift in the market.

Impact: Our findings suggest that the utilisation of mAbs CGRP inhibitors has not yet stabilised. Further findings on treatment pathways, consumer experience and medicines safety will help inform stakeholders in making relevant health policy decisions.