

IMMUNOGLOBULIN TREATMENT OF ANTIBODY DEFICIENCIES IN GERMANY – A PHARMACOECONOMIC EVALUATION

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Primary antibody deficiencies are the most common forms of primary immunodeficiencies (PID). Recurrent bacterial infections and the risk of progressive structural tissue damage are the most serious complications of these diseases. Substitution therapy with polyvalent immunoglobulins (Ig) has been established as the standard therapy in PID for several decades now.

So far mainly intravenous immunoglobulins (IVIG) are used in Germany and the therapy is administered in hospital outpatient clinics. In the recent years subcutaneous application of Ig (SCIG) has been developed which is administered as home self-infusion. Nowadays this mode of application is the standard setting for PID Ig therapy in some of the Scandinavian countries.

In December 2002 a SCIG for the use in PID substitution therapy has been licensed in Germany. Due to the recent development of costs in the health care sector questions about the pharmacoeconomic evaluation of a product are becoming increasingly important in addition to information on efficacy, safety and quality.

A cost-minimization study based on a literature search and a German PID disease survey is presented, comparing the costs of SCIG versus IVIG in the treatment of PID patients in Germany.

