

Title:	Photodynamic therapy for skin and mucosal cancer (PDT) May 1999
Agency:	Medicare Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing GPO Box 9848 Canberra ACT 2601 Australia http://www.msac.gov.au
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Aim

To assess the safety and effectiveness of the service and under what circumstances public funding should be supported for the service.

Conclusions and results

Safety PDT is safe.

Effectiveness Trials undertaken have been too small or lacked sufficient controls to provide firm evidence relating to the effectiveness of PDT relative to current treatment options. Long-term follow up is necessary to resolve uncertainties pertaining to:

- the precise role of PDT in the management of non-melanoma skin cancers and related skin lesions;
- appropriate indications for PDT;
- selection of patients for PDT;
- where to treat patients; and
- unresolved issues associated with the physics and dosimetry of PDT.

Cost-effectiveness No cost comparisons with other treatment are available. However, PDT has the potential to be very cost-effective.

Recommendations

PDT not be supported for public funding due to lack of sufficient evidence.

Method

MSAC conducted a systematic review of medical literature via Medline, EmBase, and HealthSTAR from 1993-98.

Further research

PDT trials are underway in Brisbane and at the Skin and Cancer Foundation in Melbourne. Research is continuing into the most appropriate light delivery system and photosensitiser for PDT.