



## Press statement

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### NICE rejection of Avastin criticised by national bowel cancer charity

Beating Bowel Cancer has criticised NICE's preliminary decision to not recommend Avastin (bevacizumab) for the treatment of advanced bowel cancer. Avastin has been licenced in the UK since 2005, but it is not currently available on the NHS to bowel cancer patients. Patients can only access the drug through private health insurance, clinical trials, patient access schemes in certain PCTs, or by paying to "top-up" their NHS treatment.

In response to NICE's Appraisal Consultation Document, published today, Mark Flannagan, Chief Executive of Beating Bowel Cancer, said: *"This preliminary decision by NICE is a great blow to patients with advanced bowel cancer. While we understand that it may not be a suitable treatment for all advanced bowel cancer patients, Avastin has been shown to increase survival by an average of five months, and can offer patients a better quality of life at a time when every day counts.*

*"Over the last decade we have tirelessly campaigned for open access to treatment for all bowel cancer patients, so this initial decision by NICE is certainly disappointing. We can only hope that the Cancer Drugs Fund provides treatment options for patients denied drugs on the NHS by NICE."*

- Ends -

**For media information or spokesperson interview please contact Kate Philipson at Beating Bowel Cancer on 020 8973 0008 or [kate@beatingbowelcancer.org](mailto:kate@beatingbowelcancer.org)**

Notes to editors

The full NICE Appraisal Consultation Document *Bevacizumab in combination with oxaliplatin and either 5-fluorouracil plus folinic acid or capecitabine for the treatment of metastatic colorectal cancer* can be found at [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk) from 24 August.

**Beating Bowel Cancer** is a leading UK charity for bowel cancer patients, working to raise awareness of symptoms, promote early diagnosis and encourage open access to treatment choice for those affected by bowel cancer. Through our work we aim to save lives from this common cancer. For more information visit [www.beatingbowelcancer.org](http://www.beatingbowelcancer.org).

#### Key facts about bowel cancer<sup>i</sup>

- Bowel cancer is the UK's second biggest cancer killer – claiming 16,000 lives each year - yet over 90% of bowel cancer cases can be successfully treated if diagnosed early.
- Of the 100 new cases of bowel cancer diagnosed every day, almost 50 people die from the disease.

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<sup>i</sup> Cancer Research UK statistics