Schizoaffective disorder is a chronic and disabling mental illness which continues to be a challenge for psychiatrists globally. It can be difficult to diagnose, due to its complexity and overlap in symptoms with both schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. In the past, treatment options have been limited and treatment strategies tended to focus on individual symptom control. Now, with the availability of a licensed treatment specific to schizoaffective disorder and the emergence of evolving management practices, psychiatrists and patients can be optimistic for the future.

Clinical guidelines currently recommend pharmacotherapy in conjunction with psychosocial interventions (such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), supportive psychotherapy and counselling, art therapy and self-help groups) for the treatment of both schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder. Together, these approaches can achieve symptom control, facilitate patient engagement, improve social functioning, assist in recovery and help to reduce the risk of relapse. Many patients with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder have difficulty with communication, self-care and maintaining relationships with others. Psychotherapy and psychosocial therapies focus on improving the patient’s social functioning and can help them to process thoughts about themselves, other people and their environment. This can reduce the impact the illness has on their ability to manage the social aspects of daily life.

Psychotherapy can be provided either on a one-to-one basis by mental health professionals, or in group settings involving the patient’s family. It is becoming more common for mental health teams to use psychotherapy and psychosocial interventions as part of their daily working practice.

**INVEGA® (paliperidone ER): The only antipsychotic currently licensed for the treatment of schizoaffective disorder**

INVEGA® was approved as the first antipsychotic treatment of psychotic or manic symptoms of schizoaffective disorder by the European Medicines Agency in January 2011. As a once-daily tablet, INVEGA® delivers paliperidone using the osmotic drug delivery system (OROS®) to provide a precise, controlled delivery of active drug. It therefore reduces 24-hour peak-to-trough fluctuations compared with immediate release oral antipsychotics, providing consistent efficacy and a low potential for side effects.

Trials have shown that INVEGA® significantly decreased psychotic symptoms and improved mood symptoms associated with schizoaffective disorder. INVEGA® 3-12 mg has also been shown to be effective in reducing the symptoms of schizophrenia, showing improvements in Positive and Negative Symptom Scale (PANSS) total, PANSS subscale and PANSS factor scores for all doses of INVEGA® relative to placebo. Moreover, symptom improvement was observed from day 4, suggesting a rapid onset of action.

**Well tolerated**

INVEGA® has been shown to improve night time sleep and not exacerbate day time somnolence. INVEGA® is generally well tolerated with a low incidence of extrapyramidal symptoms, favourable metabolic profile and low incidence of prolactin related adverse events in addition to being well tolerated over the longer term.

**Positive impact on personal and social functioning**

Patients with schizophrenia taking INVEGA® showed significant improvements in personal and social performance as measured by the Personal and Social Performance (PSP) scale. Performance was measured in the areas of work and study, personal and social relationships, self-care, and disturbing and aggressive behaviours.

**INVEGA® is the only antipsychotic currently licensed for the treatment of schizoaffective disorder**

**INVEGA® is effective in managing the psychotic and manic symptoms of schizoaffective disorder as well as offering broad symptom control in schizophrenia**

**INVEGA® is the first antipsychotic to have significant improvements on the Personal and Social Performance scale recognised in its Summary of Product Characteristics, for the treatment of schizophrenia**

INVEGA® prescribing information can be found on the reverse.

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