

Soliris may drive Myasthenia Gravis treatment market beyond \$550 mn

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The global market for myasthenia gravis therapeutics is anticipated to more than treble in value from \$146.4 million in 2014 to \$550.4 million by 2024, driven primarily by the potential entry of Alexion's Soliris during the forecast period, according to research and consulting firm GlobalData.

The company's latest report states that while only a small percentage of refractory myasthenia gravis patients would receive Soliris across the seven major markets (7MM) of the US, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, UK, and Japan, the drug has the potential to have a notable impact on growth due to its premium pricing.

Dr Melina Reisenberg, GlobalData's analyst covering neurology, says Soliris is expected to launch in the US in 2018, followed by its entry in the five European countries (5EU) and Japan in 2019 and 2020, respectively.

She explains: "Patients with refractory myasthenia gravis have a significant need for new targeted treatment options, as they have been unable to achieve disease control with the available therapies.

"The results from a Soliris trial in myasthenia gravis patients were promising overall. However, due to the considerable cost of Soliris, reimbursement difficulties are expected and might prevent the drug from fulfilling its commercial potential, especially in the 5EU."

Despite the current market being dominated by generics with a low annual cost of therapy, GlobalData forecasts peak year sales of \$388.9 million for Soliris across the 7MM in 2024, providing the treatment is approved and reimbursed in all markets.

The analyst adds that while opportunities will remain following the anticipated introduction of pipeline drugs, which target a

broader myasthenia gravis patient population, including non-refractory patients, the early-stage pipeline is very limited.

She continues: "Two other compounds targeting the same signaling pathway as Soliris have the potential to be developed for myasthenia gravis and could offer a more cost-effective alternative to monoclonal antibodies.

"However, neither Alnylam's ALN-CC5 nor Akari Therapeutics' (formerly Volution Immuno Pharmaceuticals) Coversin are likely to be investigated as treatments for myasthenia gravis in the near future."