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SOGC Welcomes New Oral Therapy for Endometriosis Relief

Ottawa – The SOGC welcomes a new option to add to the armamentarium of therapies that may provide relief for Canadian women living with the pelvic pain associated with endometriosis.

Health Canada has approved Visanne for the management of pelvic pain associated with endometriosis. Visanne is a long-term, oral, progestin-only regimen developed for women with endometriosis; in clinical studies of up to 15 months duration, Visanne has been shown to provide effective pain relief for these women. Visanne contains a progestin called dienogest, which suppresses the effects of estradiol on endometrial tissue and thus reduces pelvic pain.

Endometriosis is the growth of tissue, similar to the kind that lines the uterus every month, elsewhere in the abdomen. It can cause severe menstrual cramps, painful intercourse, painful urination or bowel movements, and lower back or abdominal pain. Endometriosis can greatly impact a woman's social, professional and personal life. Women with endometriosis often experience a higher incidence of depression and emotional distress due to the uncertainty of diagnosis, unpredictability of symptoms and their quality of life is negatively impacted.

"The SOGC is very pleased that there will be another therapeutic option to mitigate the immense pain of endometriosis," said Dr. Nicholas Leyland, Professor and Chair of OB/GYN at McMaster University in Hamilton and Co-Chair of the SOGC Clinical Practice - Gynaecology Committee. "Visanne provides us with another important management option for patients with the disease. Clinical trials show promise that it relieves the chronic, devastating pelvic pain caused by endometriosis. As clinicians we welcome this new treatment."

The SOGC published a Clinical Practice Guideline on Endometriosis Diagnosis and Management (2010), and administers a dedicated website about endometriosis: endometriosisinfo.ca.

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About the SOGC

The SOGC is one of Canada's oldest national specialty organizations. Established in 1944, the Society's mission is to promote excellence in the practice of obstetrics and gynaecology and to advance the health of women through leadership, advocacy, collaboration, outreach and education. The SOGC represents obstetricians/gynaecologists, family physicians, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals working in the field of sexual reproductive health. For more information, visit sogc.org.