

Boost for cancer sufferers

By Sarah Knapton

A DRUG company is to give thousands of breast cancer patients free treatment while the health service decides whether it will pay for the medication.

Pfizer said it will supply Ibrance (palbociclib) for up to five months to eligible women until a final decision is made by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence on its use across the NHS.

Around 2,400 women could benefit from the drug, which prolongs life by an average of 10 months. Pfizer said it will supply the drug for free even if Nice rule that it is not cost-effective.

Fiona Hazell, director of policy and engagement at Breast Cancer Now, said: "This is an unexpected lifeline for

thousands of women living with this type of breast cancer. We are delighted that Pfizer have listened to our campaigners and have found a way to ena-

2,400

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The number of women who could benefit from Pfizer's breast cancer drug, which prolongs life by an average of 10 months

ble patients to access this first-in-class drug in the short term."

Ibrance is for women with hormone-positive, HER2 negative breast cancer that has spread around the body and which has previously not been treated.