

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

25 August 2025

### **Singaporeans get *first access* to vitiligo cream as National Skin Centre embarks on the region's *largest* vitiligo real-world data collection<sup>1</sup>**

The real-world data collection focuses on **Ruxolitinib cream, a *groundbreaking* topical medication<sup>2</sup> that is *first* in the world to be indicated for the treatment of nonsegmental vitiligo<sup>3</sup>**

- No new treatment for vitiligo in the last decade; current topical medications have limited success in stopping the spread of vitiligo and encouraging repigmentation<sup>4</sup>
- Ruxolitinib cream, the *first* medication indicated for the treatment of nonsegmental vitiligo, is pending regulatory approvals in Singapore and in South-East Asia end 2025/early 2026
- Until then, NSC, a specialist dermatological centre of NHG Health, is excited to be the first healthcare institution in Singapore to provide vitiligo patients an *innovative treatment* on a large-scale through a special access route under the Health Sciences Authority

**Singapore, 25 August 2025** – The National Skin Centre (NSC), a specialist dermatological centre of NHG Health – a leading public healthcare group in Singapore – is pushing the boundaries of science for vitiligo patients by embarking on the largest real-world data collection on vitiligo in South-East Asia. This real-world data collection will help address critical knowledge gaps on vitiligo in our region.

“Current studies on the effectiveness of Ruxolitinib are conducted mainly on Western populations, hence experience on the effectiveness of the treatment for Asian population is lacking. This real-world experience data collection will fill the knowledge gap,” said Prof Steven Thng Tien Guan, Deputy Director of NSC, NHG Health, and Consultant in-Charge of its Pigment Clinic.

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<sup>1</sup> Real-world data are data relating to patient health status and/or the delivery of health care routinely collected from a variety of sources, e.g. data derived from electronic health records, medical claims data, data from product or disease registries, and data gathered from other sources (such as digital health technologies) that can inform on health status ([Real-World Evidence | FDA](#))

<sup>2</sup> Topical medications are medications applied directly to the skin for localised treatment or skin disorders

<sup>3</sup> When a person has non-segmental vitiligo, patches tend to appear on both sides of the body like both knees or both hands ([Vitiligo: Overview](#))

<sup>4</sup> Repigmentation, in the context of skin, refers to the process of regaining colour in areas where it has been lost, typically due to a condition like vitiligo

### **The largest real-world data collection on vitiligo in the region**

NSC targets to enrol 400-500 vitiligo patients in the programme to evaluate the efficacy and safety of Ruxolitinib cream. These vitiligo patients will be closely monitored for at least six months. Patient recruitment commences immediately (August 2025) and is expected to end around February 2026.

Vitiligo patients above 12 years old who are interested to participate can either obtain referrals to NSC from polyclinics and CHAS polyclinics, or book appointments directly with NSC.

“At Rxilient, we are committed to advancing healthcare through strategic collaboration. We are proud to support the National Skin Centre, Singapore’s premier dermatology institution, in providing early access to Ruxolitinib cream, a US and EU approved new therapy for nonsegmental vitiligo. Its product license application is under review by the Health Sciences Authority, Singapore.

As the largest specialist dermatological centre in Singapore under NHG Health, NSC offers an ideal environment for collecting real-world data on vitiligo. This initiative represents the most extensive real-world data collection on vitiligo in the region and will generate valuable insights into treatment outcomes among Southeast Asian patients. It also reinforces Singapore’s leadership in dermatological research and innovation, particularly within the Asian context,” said Dr Lawrence He, CEO of Rxilient Medical Pte Ltd.

For more information on the special access programme, please whatsapp +65 8036 1975 and/or visit: [www.vitiligosupportgroup.com](http://www.vitiligosupportgroup.com)

### **Unmet treatment needs and quality of life impact**

Vitiligo is an autoimmune disease<sup>5</sup> in which the immune system erroneously attacks melanocytes<sup>6</sup>, resulting in white patches on the skin.<sup>7</sup>

In Singapore, the prevalence rate of vitiligo is approximately 7.4 per 1,000 population. An estimated 1% of around 50,000 new patients seen annually at NSC in recent years were diagnosed with vitiligo. Face and neck are the most common sites of vitiligo, according to a local study.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Autoimmune diseases are health conditions that happen when your [immune system](#) attacks your body instead of defending it ([Autoimmune Diseases: Types, Symptoms & Treatments](#))

<sup>6</sup> Melanocytes are specialized cells responsible for producing melanin, the pigment that determines the colour of skin, hair, and eyes

<sup>7</sup> Chang WL, Lee WR, Kuo YC, Huang YH. Vitiligo: An Autoimmune Skin Disease and its Immunomodulatory Therapeutic Intervention. *Front Cell Dev Biol.* 2021 Dec 14;9:797026

<sup>8</sup> MF Chan, TG Steven Thng, CW Derrick Aw, BK Goh, SM Lee, TL Chua. Investigating factors associated with quality of life of vitiligo patients in Singapore. *International Journal of Nursing Practice* 2013; 19 (Suppl. 3), 3–10

There has been no new treatment for vitiligo in the last decade; current topical medications (corticosteroid creams and topical immunomodulators) are not indicated for the treatment of vitiligo and require regular monitoring by a doctor to prevent side effects. A significant proportion of vitiligo patients, as many as 40% of them, do not respond to conventional treatments. Ultraviolet light treatments and surgery are also treatment options offered to vitiligo patients.

International studies found approximately 41% of patients felt there was little they could do to improve their condition<sup>9</sup> and hopelessness was a common feeling<sup>10</sup>. Similarly, a local study showed that almost two-thirds of patients reported vitiligo had moderate to extreme impact on their quality of life.<sup>8</sup>

“As vitiligo is a very conspicuous condition with limited treatment possibilities, it can come with significant psychosocial effects. Some patients are known to experience fear of social judgement, social withdrawal, despair about the perceived lack of treatment options, and other concerns. The hope is that new medications such as Ruxolitinib cream can alleviate these effects and improve the patients’ quality of life,” said Prof Thng.

### **Ruxolitinib cream, a groundbreaking topical medication, may offer hope to vitiligo patients who do not respond to conventional treatments**

Ruxolitinib cream is groundbreaking because

- It is the first and only prescription medication indicated for the treatment of nonsegmental vitiligo (high medical unmet need as there was previously no approved therapies).<sup>11</sup>
- It is the first and only treatment that focuses on repigmentation<sup>12</sup>, igniting a new optimism in vitiligo patients who do not respond to conventional treatments.
- It is also the first and only topical formulation of a Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitor<sup>12</sup>, offering a new mechanism of action for treating the skin condition. Ruxolitinib cream targets an immune signal known as the JAK-STAT pathway and this is thought to help reduce the destruction of melanocytes and create an environment where repigmentation can take place over time.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Firooz A, Bouzari N, Fallah N, Ghazisaidi B, Firoozabadi MR, Dowlati Y. What patients with vitiligo believe about their condition. *International Journal of Dermatology* 2004; 43: 811–814

<sup>10</sup> Schmid-Ott G, Kunsebeck HW, Jecht E, Shimshoni R, Lazaroff I, Schallmayer S. Stigmatization experience, coping and sense of coherence in vitiligo patients. *Journal of the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology* 2007; 21: 456–461

<sup>11</sup> [Incyte Announces U.S. FDA Approval of Opzelura™ \(ruxolitinib\) Cream for the Treatment of Vitiligo | Incyte](#)

<sup>12</sup> [What is OPZELURA® \(ruxolitinib\) for Nonsegmental Vitiligo](#)

In two six-months clinical studies conducted abroad comparing the efficacy of Ruxolitinib cream and a non-medicated cream,

- About half the patients (51.5% and 51.4%) saw 50% improvement in a score that measured vitiligo areas on the face, compared with 17.2% and 23.4% of patients who used a non-medicated cream.
- About three in 10 patients (29.8% and 30.9%) saw 75% improvement in a score that measured vitiligo areas on the face, compared with 7.4% and 11.4% of patients who used a non-medicated cream.
- About one in six patients (15.5% and 15.4%) saw 90% improvement in a score that measured vitiligo areas on the face, compared with 2.2% and 1.9% of patients who used a non-medicated cream.
- Some patients (20.6% and 26.1%) saw 50% improvement in a score that measured vitiligo areas in the total body, including the face, compared with 4.9% and 11.3% of those using a non-medicated cream.<sup>13</sup>

At six months, the most common side effects observed in patients who used Ruxolitinib cream were acne at the application site, itching at the application site, common cold (nasopharyngitis), headache, urinary tract infection, redness at the application site, and fever.<sup>14</sup>

Ruxolitinib cream is approved for the treatment of nonsegmental vitiligo in the US (July 2022), Europe (April 2023) and Hong Kong (November 2024). It is pending regulatory approvals in Singapore and the region end 2025/early 2026.

“Vitiligo is an autoimmune disease that can be unpredictable, making it particularly difficult to treat. With no other approved therapies for vitiligo to date, Ruxolitinib cream is a huge gamechanger. We are eager to see how patients in this part of the world will respond to the cream. The prospect of reversing depigmentation is an exciting one as it can transform the lives of many patients with non-segmental vitiligo,” said Prof Thng.

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<sup>13</sup> [Trial Results | OPZELURA® \(ruxolitinib\) for Nonsegmental Vitiligo](#)

## About National Skin Centre

The National Skin Centre (NSC), an outpatient specialist dermatological centre of NHG Health, is helmed by a team of dermatologists who have the experience and expertise to treat a wide variety of skin conditions. The Centre facilitates subspecialisation and is the national focus for the treatment, research, and training on all aspects of skin disease, committed to fulfil our vision of Adding Years of Healthy Life to the Singapore population. With a comprehensive range of subspecialty services and serving about 70 per cent of dermatology outpatient attendance among public healthcare institutions in Singapore, NSC is firmly established as a reputable dermatology centre locally and in the region.

NSC also collaborates with the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR) and Nanyang Technological University Singapore (NTU) to operate the Skin Research Institute of Singapore (SRIS), which focuses on conducting high impact, inter-disciplinary skin research designed to translate into improved health outcomes and quality of life.

More information is available at [www.nsc.com.sg](http://www.nsc.com.sg).

## Common terms in Mandarin

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| Real-world data collection                  | 现实世界数据收集               |
| Ruxolitinib cream                           | 卢克替尼乳膏                 |
| Topical medication                          | 局部用药                   |
| Nonsegmental vitiligo                       | 非分段性白癜风                |
| Autoimmune disease                          | 自身免疫性疾病                |
| Melanocytes                                 | 黑色素细胞                  |
| Corticosteroid creams                       | 糖皮质激素类乳膏               |
| Topical immunomodulators                    | 局部免疫调节剂                |
| Ultra violet light treatments               | 紫外线照射疗法                |
| Repigmentation                              | 再色素化                   |
| Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitor                | 雅努斯激酶 (JAK) 抑制剂        |
| Immune signal known as the JAK-STAT pathway | 被称为 JAK-STAT 通路的免疫信号通路 |