



Northern Treatment Advisory Group: 6th Annual Report, June 2020

Chairman's foreword

NTAG has continued to meet regularly as a forum of experts to ensure that consistent and considered recommendations are made to Clinical Commissioning Groups on the adoption of new treatment pathways for patients in the North East, North Cumbria and parts of North Yorkshire.

The group has continued to make recommendations to ensure clinically effective treatments are adopted locally and ensuring the best use of NHS resources for the delivery of patient care. Members of NTAG have contributed to the development of the North Regional Medicine Optimisation Committee (RMOC). NTAG has also been included in the sub-regional pathway to consider the adoption of RMOC guidance for its member CCGs.

I would like to thank the members of NTAG and the expert advisors who contribute to the detailed treatment appraisals for the work they have done on this important and complex agenda.

Dr Ian Davidson,
Medical Director
NHS North Durham Clinical Commissioning Group

Appraisal and Recommendations

During the financial year 2019/20 the group produced 3 new recommendations and re-reviewed 7 previous NTAG recommendations. As per the groups terms of reference the group has concentrated on non-NICE high cost specialist drugs or treatments. The group is also increasingly being asked to issue recommendations on prescribable devices. These are often more complex there is no clear evidence of benefit for patients, as the clinical data available does not have to be as rigorous as licensed medicines. See table for further details. There continue to be referrals directly from the IFR panels, this link is key in establishing a good process for review of drugs or treatments that are being requested frequently (>5) across the region. Often the drugs and treatments for which requests are made are unlicensed and there are no national guidelines or recommendations available to guide use. Where the evidence is not clear criteria have been developed to aid IFR panels in their decisions.

The group is also keep to develop a good relationship with

specialists and hopes to add to the data available for some treatments by encouraging audit and review of less commonly used treatments.

All recommendations are based upon proven clinical outcomes, value for money and affordability.

Title	Recommendation
Andexanet alfa (Ondexxya®) Factor Xa inhibitor antidote	Not recommended.
Patiomer cation exchange resin for hyperkalaemia	Not recommended but subsequently superseded by NICE TA Feb 2020
Voke® for nicotine replacement therapy	Not recommended on the NHS or for GP prescribing
FreeStyle Libre® Glucose Monitoring System –	Updated to reflect NHS England funding criteria and minor clarifications to text to confirm when GP expected to take on prescribing plus wording on previous self-funders changed to match exact NHS England wording.
Alfapump® device for the treatment of ascites due to Liver Cirrhosis.	No change to recommendation which recommends recommends the use in refractory ascites caused by advanced liver disease for patients that fulfil the agreed criteria. Clinical evidence section updated to reference NICE IPG631.
Sodium oxybate(Xyrem®) for Narcolepsy with Cataplexy in adult patients	Reviewed in light of RMOC Advisory Statement but no changes currently made.
Sativex® for non-MS pain	Updated to include reference to new NICE guidance on cannabis based medicines for chronic pain. No change to not to recommended use for non-MS pain.
Lycra Garments for the management of cerebral palsy and other neurological or musculoskeletal conditions.	Reviewed for new evidence but no change to current recommendation not to recommend use other than via IFR.
Non-invasive transcutaneous vagus nerve stimulation (nVNS) for treatment of cluster headache and migraine.	Updated to include reference to new NICE guidance.

All of the above recommendations and their associated appraisal documents can be accessed via the NTAG website. professional secretary:

Membership

The group is now well established and. Representation has been drawn from throughout NHS North East & Cumbria, both geographically and strategically (i.e. primary and specialist care, providers and commissioners.)

Patient representation has been difficult to achieve in the past due to the specialist nature of drugs or treatments reviewed by NTAG. It was pleasing that NTAG was able to recruit a new patient representative to NTAG from February 2020 following a three year gap.

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Work plan

The majority of appraisals have been conducted following a referral or request to the group by APCs or IFR panels, with a minority identified prospectively through horizon scanning processes. The current work plan is available on the website and is updated following each meeting should any changes be made.

Impact of NTAG Recommendations on Prescribing Data

During 2019/20 NTAG agreed to review the impact of its recommendations since 2017 of prescribing data in both primary and secondary care on a six monthly basis. The purpose of this was to monitor the update and compliance with NTAG recommendations across the region. Where prescribing appeared differ to the NTAG recommendation in primary care this was fed back to the appropriate CCG Medicines Optimisation Team for further investigation.

Further information

This is the 6th annual report for NTAG and covers the period of April 2019 to March 2020.

The group will continue to review its remit following the establishment of Regional Medicines Optimisation Committees (RMOCs) however currently the RMOCs have a slightly different remit to NTAG with NTAG concentrating on the review of high cost drugs and treatments.

NTAG will continue to review its accountability arrangements as NHS structures change within the region.

The NTAG website serves as the primary source of information for NTAG. However further details can be provided by the