Department of Health & Social Care

NHS

COVID-19 Therapeutic Alert

CEM/CMO/2023/001 29 March 2023

Publication of NICE Multiple Technology Appraisal (MTA) - Treatment Recommendations for COVID-19

Summary

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has now published its final multiple technology appraisal (MTA) guidance [TA878], which includes positive treatment recommendation for the following licensed COVID-19 treatments:

- Nirmatrelvir plus ritonavir (Paxlovid)
- Sotrovimab (Xevudy)
- Tocilizumab (RoActemra)

The published MTA does not recommend the use of casirivimab plus imdevimab (Ronapreve).

NICE TA guidance places statutory commissioning obligations on NHS commissioners (including Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) in England). NHS commissioners, working in partnership with local NHS providers and clinicians, will need to comply with the recommendations in the MTA within 90 days of the date of its publication. Please refer to any additional country-specific guidance in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) collaborated with NICE on the MTA TA878: casirivimab plus imdevimab, nirmatrelvir plus ritonavir, sotrovimab and tocilizumab for treating COVID-19 and as as a result the NICE MTA has standing in Scotland.

For the medicines covered in the published MTA, NICE's guidance therefore effectively supersedes (replaces) the interim UK-wide clinical access decisions determined under pandemic-specific commissioning arrangements. Consequently, these UK-wide interim clinical access policies have now become 'legacy' documents.

Clinicians may wish to refer to NICE's updated COVID-19 rapid guideline for medicines licensed, and currently used, in the management of COVID-19 for which MTA recommendations have not yet been published. The off-label use of baricitinib and sarilumab in the management of COVID-19 falls outside of the scope of the MTA and will be for determination under local governance arrangements. The COVID-19 rapid guideline was informed by the interim UK wide clinical commissioning policies and therefore has standing in Scotland.

In England, the current national Blueteq (prior approval) forms for baricitinib, Paxlovid, sarilumab, sotrovimab and tocilizumab will be disabled from day 90 after publication of the NICE MTA on COVID-19 therapeutics, and any future reporting will be subject to local commissioner determination.

Action

Local commissioners and commissioned providers of NHS COVID treatments are asked to:

1. **Note and fulfil the requirement to implement NICE's MTA recommendations within 90 days of its publication, particularly ensuring access to medicines subject to positive recommendations - nirmatrelvir plus ritonavir (Paxlovid), sotrovimab (Xevudy) and tocilizumab (RoActemra).** *Please refer to any additional country-specific guidance on implementation in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.*

2. **Note that final MTA treatment recommendations for molnupiravir (Lagevrio), remdesivir (Veklury) and tixagevimab plus cilgavimab (Evusheld) are unlikely to be available until later in 2023 as they are subject to appeal. In the meantime, NICE's COVID-19 rapid guideline covers the use of these medicines and remains available at the following link.**

3. **Access to baricitinib and sarilumab, as off-label treatment options falling outside of the scope of the MTA, is for local determination.**

Distribution

- NHS Trusts (England and Northern Ireland), and NHS boards (Scotland and Wales)
- Integrated Care Boards (England)
- Primary Care (including out of hours providers)
- National / Regional Medical Directors
- National / Regional Chief Pharmacists
- Lead/Senior Pharmacists and Regional Procurement Pharmacy Leads
- Trust/Hospital Pathology Directors (to circulate to pathology networks and laboratory staff)
- Trust / Hospital Medical Directors (to circulate to medical and nursing staff managing admitted patients infected with COVID-19)

Enquiries

England

Enquiries from NHS trusts in England should in the first instance be directed to your trust pharmacy team who will escalate issues to the Regional Chief Pharmacist and national teams if required. Further information can be requested from the dedicated email address: england.spoc-c19therapeutics@nhs.net.

Northern Ireland

Enquiries from hospitals in Northern Ireland should in the first instance be directed to your hospital pharmacy team who will escalate issues to the Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service or Pharmaceutical Directorate at the Department of Health if

required Further information can be obtained by contacting RPHPS.Admin@northerntrust.hscni.net

Scotland

Enquiries from hospitals in Scotland should in the first instance be directed to your hospital pharmacy team who will escalate issues to either NHS National Procurement or the Scottish Government's Medicines Policy Team if required. Contact should be made using the following emails: nss.nhssmedicineshortages@nhs.scot or medicines.policy@gov.scot

Wales

Enquiries from hospitals in Wales should in the first instance be directed to the health board's Chief Pharmacist who will escalate issues to the Pharmacy and Prescribing Team at Welsh Government if required. Enquiries to the Welsh Government should be directed to: COVID-19.Pharmacy.Prescribing@gov.wales.