



What is the Area Prescribing Committee (APC)?

The APC is a group of representative prescribers and funders of medicines in Nottinghamshire (from Doctors Surgeries, local hospitals, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Community Services, public health & Community Pharmacists). There is also a patient representative. The names of the committee members can be found on bulletins on the APC website.

What does the APC do?

The APC makes decisions about which medicines (including tablets/capsules, injections, creams, drops, nutritional products and medical devices) are recommended for prescribing in Nottinghamshire and whether a hospital specialist, General Practitioner (GP) or other prescriber (non-medical prescriber, see explanation on page 2) is best to do the prescribing. The APC approves guidelines about medicines which are used by both hospital specialists and GPs/non-medical prescribers. This means that it doesn't matter within Nottinghamshire where a patient is being treated – the person looking after them will be using the same guidelines and prescribing the same medicines.



What is a medicines formulary?

A formulary is a list of medicines which are recommended for prescribing. In Nottinghamshire, the same formulary is used by the hospital specialists and GPs/non-medical prescribers (joint formulary). The Nottinghamshire Joint Formulary is an extensive resource containing extra information for health care professionals. The formulary also includes the local 'traffic light' for each medicine contained within it (see overleaf for a description of the traffic light system).

Where can I find the Nottinghamshire Joint Formulary

The joint formulary is on the public website www.nottinghamshireformulary.nhs.uk. Please be aware that the formulary is written for health care professionals and patients are not recommended to make health decisions based on the information contained within it.



How does the APC make the decision whether to include a medicine in the formulary?

The APC decision framework is available on the APC website. This is in accordance with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) Good Practice Guide for Formulary Development and Management. The things that the APC takes into consideration are:

- Clinical effectiveness (how good is the medicine at treating the specific condition)
- If the medicine offers significant benefits to patients
- Safety
- Cost effectiveness (The relationship between the cost of the treatment and the effect on the condition)
- Positive NICE Technology Appraisal Guideline (A national guideline which must be adhered to)





What is a 'traffic light' system for medicines?

Each of the medicines in the formulary has a traffic light colour given to it. The traffic light system is a guide to prescribers about where and who should be prescribing the medicine.

Red	Hospital/specialist prescribing only. This may be because the medicine is only available in hospital or you require special monitoring when you are taking it.
Amber 1	Shared prescribing between hospital and GP/non -medical prescriber. You will be seen by both the hospital and GP/non-medical prescriber who will work closely to monitor and prescribe for you.
Amber 2	GP can prescribe after the hospital have recommended or initiated a medicine
Amber 3	These medicines can be prescribed by a GP or non-medical prescriber if they are following a locally agreed specialist guideline.
Green	These medicines can be prescribed by either the hospital or GP/non-medical Prescriber
Grey / Non formulary	No-one should be prescribing these medicines unless in extreme circumstances.
Low priority	Stronger version of Grey. Prescribing of these medicines is actively discouraged as the evidence doesn't support a benefit to patients.

Where can I find out what decisions the APC has made?



Information on APC decisions can be found at www.nottsapc.nhs.uk

- The formulary decisions are generally included in the formulary within two weeks of the decision being made at www.nottinghamshireformulary.nhs.uk
- Guidelines, minutes, bulletins and other documents are on the APC website in the relevant section.

What is a non-medical prescriber?

These days it's not just doctors who prescribe medicines. Non-medical prescribing is when a qualified prescriber, who is not a doctor, gives you a prescription. A non-medical prescriber may be a nurse, midwife or pharmacist.



What about medical devices?

The APC will consider medical devices in the same way they consider medicines and whether the device can be prescribed on the NHS by GPs.

Where do I go for more information?

You can ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist about your medicines or your care.

For any queries relating to the APC you can email MACCG.Nottsapc@nhs.net

For compliments and complaints contact Patient Experience Team (PET) by calling 0800 0283 693 press Option 1, or emailing NSHCCG.Pet-North@nhs.net

