Integrated Care System
Nottingham & Nottinghamshire

Commissioning position for biosimilar and originator biologic medicines

Biological medicines are important, clinically effective medicines which can significantly impact on a patient's disease. Many biological medicines are coming off patent and "biosimilars" are becoming available. These medicines are highly similar to the original biological medicine already licensed for use but are typically much cheaper than the originator products. This provides the NHS with an opportunity to save money, whilst also increasing access to these important medicines.

The Nottinghamshire ICS would like to offer clarity regarding our commissioning position for biosimilar medicines. Patients who are naïve to the originator product should be initiated on the biosimilar product first line whenever possible, assuming that it is available at a lower acquisition cost.

The Nottinghamshire ICS appreciate all provider efforts to utilise biosimilar medications, including the switching of existing patients currently using an originator biologic. The ICS accepts that there are very rare instances when a patient may require use of the originator product, such as in the event of an adverse event to the biosimilar. Under these circumstances, the ICS will continue to fund treatment irrespective of the brand provided.

The Nottinghamshire ICS believes that this commissioning position supports NICE guidance to *"start treatment with the least expensive drug (taking into account administration costs, dose needed and product price per dose)*". It is also in line with the NHS England 'Commissioning framework for biological medicines (including biosimilar medicines)', which recommends that providers have policies to encourage clinically and cost effective prescribing of biological medicines.

We believe a collaborative approach to the commissioning of biologic medicines, including the use of biosimilars, is vital to ensure best use of limited NHS resources whilst delivering high quality patient care.

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