



## 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). Additionally, we strive to ensure that the patient voice is heard and we pride ourselves in having active patient representatives as key element of the membership. The names of the committee members can be found within the annual reports available under the [publications](#) section of the APC website.

## What does the APC do?

The APC meets bi-monthly to make 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 prescribers (non-medical prescriber, see explanation on page 2) is best to do the prescribing. We use national guidance such as NICE to direct our work. The APC approves guidelines about medicines that are used by both hospital specialists and GPs/non-medical prescribers. This means that it does not matter where a patient is being treated within Nottinghamshire – the person looking after them will be using the same guidelines and prescribing the same medicines. Most areas have an equivalent to our APC, and the APC works with other neighbouring APCs or similar to ensure there is equity and consistency for patients. We endeavour to be consistent and aligned with our surrounding areas so that if you choose to seek specialist care outside of Nottinghamshire, your treatment will also be consistent. The work programme and future meeting dates can be found [here](#).



## What is a medicines formulary?

A formulary is a list of medicines which are recommended for prescribing as well as those which are not recommended. 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](http://www.nottinghamshireformulary.nhs.uk). Please be aware that the formulary is aimed for health care professionals and not intended to be patient facing.



## 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)
- What 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.

<b>Red</b>	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.
<b>Amber 1</b>	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.
<b>Amber 2</b>	GP can prescribe after the hospital have recommended or initiated a medicine
<b>Amber 3</b>	These medicines can be prescribed by a GP or non-medical prescriber if they are following a locally agreed specialist guideline.
<b>Green</b>	These medicines can be prescribed by either the hospital or GP/non-medical Prescriber
<b>Grey / Non formulary</b>	No-one should be prescribing these medicines unless in extreme circumstances.
<b>Low priority</b>	Stronger version of Grey. Prescribing of these medicines is actively discouraged as the evidence does not 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](http://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](http://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 is 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 include 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 [nccg.nottsapc@nhs.net](mailto:nccg.nottsapc@nhs.net)

For compliments and complaints contact Patient Experience Team (PET) by calling 0115 883 9570, or emailing [nnicb-nn.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:nnicb-nn.patientexperience@nhs.net).

