

16 August 2012

Room 406A
Skipton House
80 London Road
London SE1 6LH

Gateway Reference: 17880

To: NHS Acute, Mental Health and Primary Care Chief Pharmacists, England
SHA Pharmacy and Prescribing Leads

Innovation Health and Wealth: Local Formularies

Dear Colleague,

In December 2011, the NHS CEO, Sir David Nicholson, published his report [Innovation, Health and Wealth: Accelerating Adoption and Diffusion in the NHS \(IHW\)](#).

This is an important document that will help ensure patients have access to the technologies they need, whilst also forming a key part of the Prime Minister's strategy to secure economic growth.

IHW sets out a broad range of actions, under a programme of work being led by Sir Ian Carruthers. The whole programme is being implemented in partnership with the life sciences industry.

One of the IHW actions is:

“We will require that all NICE technology appraisal recommendations are incorporated automatically into relevant local NHS formularies in a planned way that supports safe and appropriate clinical practice.”

Other actions include the development of

- a new “NICE compliance regime” (including an Innovation Scorecard for local organisations) that will ensure rapid and consistent implementation throughout the NHS. This will reduce variation and assure patients of their access to the clinically and cost effective technologies and medicines their doctors believe they need.
- a “NICE Implementation Collaborative” that will see a broad range of organisations (including the Royal Pharmaceutical Society) signing a Concordat to improve implementation of NICE guidance

I have been asked to lead a short life working group to oversee the implementation of the action on formularies. Given your key role in this issue, I am writing to update you on progress and to encourage you to take local action to ensure compliance with this action.

You will wish to be aware that [Sir David Nicholson has written to NHS CEOs](#) on this work, and alerted colleagues to a requirement to publish local NHS formularies by 1 April 2013.

The NICE Medicines and Prescribing Centre has been commissioned to develop good practice guidance on formularies. This is likely to be published by the end of 2012. It will include updated guidance on "Area Prescribing Committees". I hope you will agree such an area wide approach is best practice to local formulary development, whilst respecting the particular clinical needs of individual organisations.

If you have not done so already, I would strongly encourage you to review your local formulary processes to begin implementation of the IHW action. I would suggest you do this in collaboration with emerging CCGs, and between you decide how best to take this forward in a way that not only supports the IHW action, but considers local clinical and patient needs, how best to reduce inappropriate variation, how best to optimise medicines use, and whether there is scope to decrease any administrative burdens of formulary maintenance. I am fully aware this will not be without its challenges, although I know some organisations, such as University College London Hospitals have already put in place processes to deliver the action.

I will be looking to the SHA pharmacy and prescribing leads to keep me informed on progress, to share examples of best practice, including how the views and needs of the emerging health and social care system are being considered, and in particular those of local commissioners.

Many thanks for your support in this important matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. W. Ridge', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr Keith Ridge
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Chief Pharmaceutical Officer