To:
Directors of Commissioning Operations, NHS England (South)
Medical Directors, Acute Hospital Trusts, South of England
STP leads

6 December 2017

Dear Colleagues

NEXT STEPS - COMMISSIONNING FRAMEWORK FOR BIOLOGICAL MEDICINES (INCLUDING BIOSIMILAR MEDICINES)

In September 2017, NHS England and NHS Improvement jointly published a commissioning framework for biological medicines. The framework is available via the following link – https://www.england.nhs.uk/medicines/biosimilar-medicines

The framework was launched by Simon Stevens and described how commissioners must work closely with providers, clinical teams and patients to quickly and consistently support the uptake of the best-value biological medicines, including biosimilars. The estimated savings in the South of England region are estimated at more than £70 million.

South of England Approach

The purpose of this document is to communicate the approach and actions that we propose to take across the South of England to ensure that the framework ambitions are delivered in a consistent way both across the region and nationally. We are therefore requesting full engagement with this important work programme across the South of England, aiming to:

- establish a regional best-value biological medicines implementation group linked to the Regional Medicines Optimisation Committee (RMOC)
- provide recommendations from the South West Clinical Senate Council with regard to biosimilar uptake and prioritisation
• linking with Strategic Transformation Partnerships (STP), undertake a rapid assessment of CCGs planning and readiness for the uptake of best-value biological medicines
• through a collaboration of Commissioning Support Units (CSU), identify and provide support for the five health economies in the region where the uptake of CCG-commissioned best-value biological medicines has been slow or where the largest unrealised opportunities exist. Support materials and resources from this work will be shared across the system
• develop and share data packs on the best-value biological medicines currently available, highlighting variation in uptake between STPs and their CCGs
• actively communicate well in advance when a new best-value biological medicine enters the market to support planning and rapid uptake; the specific focus at present is on adalimumab so local planning is encouraged and preparative work is underway
• host regional webinars for colleagues to learn more about supporting local uptake of best-value biological medicines
• through NHS Improvement, engage in improvement conversations with provider trusts with regard to their uptake of biosimilars, specifically in the context of the ‘top 10 medicines’ Model Hospital analysis.

We have included a list of key stakeholders and their roles with regard to best value biological medicines (appendix 1) which you may find helpful in developing local plans.

Key milestones and actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Action owner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6th December</td>
<td>Provide recommendations from South West Clinical Senate Council regarding uptake and prioritization of biosimilars</td>
<td>NHS England</td>
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<tr>
<td>By end of December 2017</td>
<td>Establish regional biosimilar implementation group and terms of reference</td>
<td>NHS England (South) &amp; NHS Improvement</td>
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| 22nd December 2017      | 1. STPs to ensure constituent CCGs complete and return the national CCG planning template to [england.biosimilars@nhs.net](mailto:england.biosimilars@nhs.net)  
2. Analysis of CCG responses commences | 1. STPs                                  
2. NHS England Policy Team |
| 30th January 2018       | Agenda item for awareness-raising and implementation of Clinical Senate recommendations          | Regional Medicine Optimisation Committee |
February 2018

| 1. Analysis of responses complete and shared with regional teams |
| 2. Identify the five health economies with lowest uptake or largest opportunities |
| 3. CSU support work commences |
| 1. NHS England Policy Team |
| 2. Regional biosimilar implementation group & CSU |
| 3. CSUs |

We very much appreciate your cooperation on this matter at this busy time and look forward to being kept abreast of local developments on this important area of work.

We will keep you informed of progress.

For any further details or discussion please contact Stephen Brown, the regional lead pharmacist for NHSE and NHSI on Stephen.brown17@nhs.net.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Nigel Acheson  
Regional Medical Director (South)  
NHS England

Dr Rachael de Caux  
Regional Medical Director (South)  
NHS Improvement

Janet Meek  
Regional Director of Specialised Commissioning (South)  
NHS England

Hugh Marshall  
Regional Productivity Director (South)  
NHS Improvement
**Best Value Biological Medicines –**  
**Roles to support the uptake of biosimilar medicines in delivering the NHS England ‘Commissioning framework for biological medicines (including biosimilar medicines)’** *

The following table provides a brief overview of the roles and anticipated engagement of relevant groups, bodies and organisations in the context of the implementation of best value biological agents (specifically adalimumab) in accordance with the published commissioning framework*.

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<th>Group / Body / Organisation</th>
<th>Role</th>
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| **Patients***               | Talk to your doctor about your medicines, so you understand them and what the different options are.  
                             | Ask them if there is a biosimilar medicine that would be appropriate for you.                                                     |
| **Prescribers***            | Consider whether a biosimilar medicine may be appropriate for new patients.  
                             | Consider whether it would be appropriate to switch existing patients to a biosimilar medicine.  
                             | Keep up to date with news from your CCG about biosimilar medicines becoming available.                                           |
| **Providers***              | Put in place policies and support for clinicians to enable them to make clinically and cost effective choices in prescribing  
                             | biological medicines.  
                             | Have a communication and implementation plan in place to alert prescribers to new and better value biological and biosimilar medicines that become available, and engage patients affected. |
| **Commissioners***          | Ensure that your providers have in place policies to encourage clinically and cost effective prescribing of biological medicines.  
                             | Have a communication and implementation plan in place to alert providers to new and better value biological and biosimilar medicines that become available, and to engage patients.  
                             | Liaise with your NHS England Regional Pharmacist to understand whether there are framework agreements for the biological and biosimilar medicines that you pay for. |
| **Biosimilar Medicine Programme Board** | Provide strategic direction and oversight for a jointly delivered national programme of work |
| **NHSE/NHSI Regional Pharmacists** | Jointly co-ordinate and provide advice and support to the system, and address regional implementation; work collaboratively through Regional Medicines Optimisation Committees and the NHS Improvement Hospital Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation team (see below). |
| **Regional Medicines Optimisation Committees** | Provide guidance and advice to providers and commissioners and to share best practice.  
                             | Review and act upon variation in uptake of best value biologicals.                                                               |
| **NHS Improvement Hospital Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation Team (includes NHSI / NHSE Regional Pharmacists)** | Monitor uptake through the Model Hospital Dashboard and act upon variation in uptake of best value biologicals. |
**Commissioning Support Units**

Undertake data analysis to identify the five health economies in each region with the lowest use of biosimilar medicines and provide targeted approach to these health economies. Actions may include toolkits, contract management support, trust workload assessment, engagement of professional bodies for clarity on their recommendations, facilitation of commissioning/provider discussions.

**Academic Health Science Networks**

Provide general support through networks to implement the Commissioning Framework and explore business potential with NIHR of making NHS much more open to research for biosimilar companies.

**Pharmaceutical Marketing Supplies Group / Commercial Medicines Unit**

Plan and implement contracting arrangements, address legal issues, enable homecare delivery, undertake horizon scanning of biosimilar pipeline and provide the necessary advice to the pharmaceutical industry.

**NHS Clinical Commissioners**

Enable Clinical Commissioning Groups to be proactive in commissioning the best value biological agents, sharing best practice and providing advice and support.

**NHS Specialised Commissioning Pharmacy Team**

Be proactive in commissioning the best value biological agents though regional hubs, sharing best practice and providing advice and support.

**Clinical Advocates**

Engage as advocate for the Medicines Value Programme through adopting a clinical champion role for best value biologics. (Note: Clinical Advocate roles are under development)

**Provider Chief Pharmacists**

Ensure that the responsibilities of providers (summarised above) are in place and that any barriers to implementation are addressed.

**Commissioner Heads of Medicines Optimisation**

Ensure that the responsibilities of commissioners (summarised above) are in place and that any barriers to implementation are addressed.

**NHSE Task and Finish Group (Adalimumab Implementation)**

Map out the implementation of best value adalimumab products and create a coherent delivery plan; to include:
- Pre-launch action, timeline and plan
- Procurement options and plans
- Co-ordination of stakeholder engagement
- Signposting to supporting guidance
- Enable development of supporting guidance to sit alongside the Commissioning Framework and Cancer Vanguard (rituximab) tool.

* Commissioning framework for biological medicines (including biosimilar medicines); NHS England; September 2017
(For groups marked * the role is documented in the commissioning framework)

Prepared by Steve Brown (Regional Pharmacist, NHSE/NHSI South of England) and Phil Thomas (Medicines Optimisation Delivery Lead, NHSE)
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