

Terms of reference

Area Prescribing Group

Constitution

NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Area Prescribing Group (APG) will provide a strategic framework for the integrated, safe, clinically effective, and cost-effective use of medicines and prescribable devices across the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care System (ICS) footprint, to ensure equity in access to medicines, optimisation of medicines and device use, and improved patient experience.

The underpinning subgroups, when making recommendations to the APG, will ensure that patient outcomes, safety considerations and cost effectiveness are at the forefront of the decision-making process.

Purpose

- The APG will promote the co-ordinated, evidence-based, safe, effective, and economical use of medicines within NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICS
- The APG will ensure that robust standards and governance are established to ensure effective area wide decision-making/advice related to prescribing
- The APG will promote seamless medicines optimisation across organisations within the Cheshire and Merseyside ICS footprint
- The APG will provide a forum for the discussion of medicines related guidelines/pathways relevant to prescribing. Key deliverables and duties include members and representatives to seek to gather input and comments from their organisations via a robust consultation process to ensure all relevant stakeholders have an opportunity to input into APG consultations
- The APG will undertake horizon scanning to forecast developments in medicines related healthcare, support the introduction of new medicines, and provide effective leadership in managing change
- The APG will, on behalf of the health economy, manage the joint formulary
- The APG will consider the cost effectiveness of existing treatments and make recommendations for prescribing change where appropriate
- The APG will have oversight of the formulary harmonisation programme and recommend a consistent formulary status for medicines and prescribable devices across Cheshire and Merseyside
- The APG will ensure the formulary is updated in response to national guidance, medicines licence changes, and safety alerts related to medicines. For example, by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) or the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
- The APG will report to the Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group of the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB) for ratification of APG recommendations as per ICB Standing Financial Instructions (SFI) and Scheme of Delegation (SORD) limits, and refer further approvals to the appropriate responsible ICB officer and/or the Finance, Investment and Resources Committee

Membership

The following organisations are members of the Cheshire and Merseyside APG and shall be involved in the development and implementation of APG recommendations:

Organisational Membership

- NHS trusts (acute, specialist and community)
- ICB Places' Medicines Teams
- Primary Care GPs
- ICB Finance lead
- ICB Chief Pharmacist
- ICB Medical Director
- Lay person
- LMC
- LPC
- Public Health

Organisational contribution will be via APG subgroups and consultation process.

The APG will oversee the work of the APG subgroups to ensure that defined processes have been followed and that the APG recommendation reflects the consensus of the subgroup.

APG Membership

- Chair or Vice chair
- 2 Place Medicines Leads
- 2 GP representatives
- 2 Trust representatives - 1 representative from each of the Provider Collaboratives

Members of the APG attend APG meetings as representatives of their work sector, not their employing organisation.

Quoracy

- Chair
- 1 Place Medicines Lead
- 1 GP representative
- 1 Trust representative

The following will be in regular attendance at the meeting but will have no voting rights:

- Local Medical Committee (LMC) - 1 representative
- Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC) - 1 representative
- Cheshire and Merseyside ICB Finance - 1 representative
- Cheshire and Merseyside ICB Chief Pharmacist
- Lay representative

- MLCSU secretariat
- Subgroup chair as required

CMAPG will co-opt colleagues from within the system and/or external experts where required by the agenda. Attendance at the APG is a non-remunerated role and commitment is within existing people T&Cs.

The APG Chair and Vice Chair will have strong interpersonal qualities, are able to command the respect of their peers, and have the skills of chairmanship. The Chair and Vice Chair position will be reviewed as part of the ongoing APG regular review.

Attendance

- It is expected that representative members or their nominated deputies will attend all meetings
- All members will be expected to have familiarised themselves with the agenda and supporting documents prior to the meeting
- All members will be expected to contribute at the meetings, share information/actions required and bring views of their colleagues to the meeting as appropriate
- All members are expected to undertake work as necessary between meetings
- All members are required to declare prior to each meeting any outside interest, which might have a bearing on their actions, views and involvement in discussions within the Group
- Other individuals may be invited to attend by the Chair as appropriate to the agenda items being discussed
- Attendance of the requesting clinicians and manufacturer is not allowed at the meeting

Quorum

- The APG will be quorate if the Chair, one Place Medicines Lead representative, one NHS provider Trust representative and one GP representative are in attendance
- If the meeting is not quorate, the APG will be made aware. This will be recorded in the minutes and documented in the APG approvals report
- A non-quorate meeting can proceed and recommendations made to the ICB MOP Group, however the scale and impact of the non-quoracy need to be clearly reported to the MOP Group. The APG may choose to use a virtual process to agree recommendations, as appropriate
- No person can act in more than one capacity when determining the quorum
- An individual who has been disqualified from participating in a discussion on any matter and/or from voting on any motion by reason of a declaration of a conflict of interest, shall no longer count towards the quorum

Frequency and Notice

- Meetings will be held monthly or at a frequency determined by the Chair
- Notice of each meeting, including an agenda and supporting papers, shall be forwarded to each member of the Group not less than seven calendar days before the date of the meeting

- Agenda items will be worked on by subgroups and/or the APG secretariat as appropriate
- All APG members can request agenda items for discussion
- Any reports scheduled for consideration should be submitted at least 10 calendar days before the meeting to the Professional Secretary and meeting administrator using the standard template documentation
- Inclusion of late items will be at the Chair's discretion

Authority

- The APG is a recommending group and members will be required to work within the governance arrangements of the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB
- Recommendations will be submitted to the ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy Group for approval as per ICB Standing Financial Instructions (SFI) and Scheme of Delegation (SORD) limits, and refer further approvals to the appropriate responsible ICB officer and/or the Finance, Investment and Resources Committee
- If a consensus recommendation cannot be made by the APG, this will be escalated to the Medical Director and Chief Pharmacist of NHS Cheshire and Merseyside and advice sought

Duties

- The Group will promote treatments for which there is good evidence of clinical effectiveness in improving the health status of patients and is cost effective; it will not recommend a treatment that is shown to be ineffective.
- Recommendations will be made on the best available evidence; ideally this will be fully published trial data
- Public Health, clinical experts and/or networks will be consulted where recommendations potentially have effects on health outcomes and pathways

Conflicts of interest

- All members and deputies of the APG are expected to conform to the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB [conflicts of interest policy](#) regarding registering and declaring potential Conflicts of Interest
- **All** members and deputies will complete an annual declaration of interest as per [Cheshire and Merseyside Conflict of interest policy](#) and return to the ICB Governance Team and the APG secretariat
- If there are changes to any member's interests in the interim which may affect any APG discussion this must be declared at the time of the meeting. An updated annual declaration of interest form must be completed and submitted as soon as possible after the change in conflict of interest has been identified
- All members, deputies and attendees of the Group must inform the Group when they believe there may be a potential conflict of interest. An assessment will be made by the Chair regarding the level

of further participation in the discussion and decision on that agenda item, and this will be recorded in the minutes

- If the Chair declares a potential conflict of interest, then they should stand down for that agenda item and a deputy Chair should take on the role of the Chair

Reporting

- The APG is accountable to NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB and recommendations will be submitted to the ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy Group and the Finance, Investment and Resources Committee as appropriate.
- The APG final approvals report will be published on the publicly accessible CMAPG website (details TBC)

Monitoring Compliance

The terms of reference of the Group shall be reviewed by the ICB at least annually.

Reviewing Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the Group (including membership) shall be reviewed and approved at least annually.