

## Will the NHS fund my treatment?

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Each year, NHS Dorset CCG receives money to pay for health care for patients who are registered with GP practices in Dorset.

NHS resources are limited and the CCG must ensure that it secures the best health results for as many people in Dorset as possible, and achieves best value for money.

The CCG must therefore prioritise funding for treatments that are proven to work, improve people's health and offer good value for money.

Most treatments are routinely funded and others are funded in accordance with a set of agreed CCG clinical access protocols or policies. In essence this means that if a patient's clinical circumstances fall within the agreed access criteria for their condition then their treatment is routinely funded.

There are some treatments that the CCG does not routinely fund. These include:

- **New treatments, or existing treatments being used for a new condition, where there is limited evidence that they work and/or provide good value for money;**
- **Treatments for a rare condition where the CCG has not yet developed a position;**
- **Treatments where a patient's clinical circumstances do not match those in the agreed clinical access protocol**

This leaflet explains how your doctor (GP or Hospital Consultant) can ask, on your behalf, NHS Dorset CCG to fund a treatment that we do not routinely fund.

This is called making an Individual Patient Treatment request (IPTR) and NHS Dorset CCG works to a clear policy when dealing with such requests.

You can download this policy at:

### [Policy for Individual Patient Treatment.](#)

This can be found on the downloads section of the Dorset CCG website.

## Making an Individual Patient Treatment request

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If your doctor feels that you should receive a treatment that is not routinely funded by NHS Dorset CCG they will need to complete an application form and submit it to us together with any supporting information.

When making an application, your doctor will need to demonstrate that there are exceptional clinical circumstances in your case. It is difficult to be specific about what constitutes clinical exceptionality and the Policy for Individual Patient Treatment outlines which factors are taken into consideration and which are not.

Requests cannot be submitted directly by the patient. This is because the doctor treating the patient is best placed to know the patient's clinical condition, how their clinical circumstances compare to patients with similar conditions, and the treatment options.

We will reply to the request as soon as is possible

and will make a decision within 28 days.

Sometimes we will ask your doctor for more information and we will ask them to provide this as quickly as possible.

## How will a decision be made?

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Your request will be considered by the Individual Patient Treatment Team at NHS Dorset CCG.

If the request is not straightforward then it will be considered by an Individual Patient Treatment Panel. The Panel meets every month and is made up of a number of clinically qualified people including GPs, Hospital Consultants, a Public Health Consultant, and two Patient and Public Involvement Representatives.

The Panel considers each request on an individual patient basis, ensuring that a fair and consistent process is followed. They consider all requests in line with the policy for Individual Patient Treatments and do not consider social or economic factors when making decisions.

The Panel does not take into account resultant psychological factors when determining clinical exceptionality. They are looking solely at clinical factors which mean that the patient is significantly different from other patients with the same condition, or that the clinical condition is exceptionally rare.

## Can I attend a Panel meeting?

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Patients are not allowed to attend the Panel meeting. This helps to ensure that the Panel remains impartial and consistent. It is also felt that it would be inappropriate for a patient to be put in a position that could make them feel that the Panel's

approval relied on their 'performance' at the Panel meeting.

### **Informing you of the decision**

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The doctor who made the request will be informed of the Panel's decision within seven working days of the Panel meeting. Your doctor will contact you to discuss the decision.

We will send a copy of the letter to you to help you prepare for your meeting with your doctor, unless your doctor has advised us that you do not wish to receive a copy.

NHS Dorset CCG feels that Panel decisions are best discussed directly between a patient and their doctor. This is so that the decision can be explained and you can discuss, as soon as possible, what it means in respect of the next steps of your care.

### **What happens if the Panel does not agree to fund your treatment?**

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If your doctor disagrees with the decision of the Panel and feels that there is additional information which had not been made available with the original request or feels that information has not been interpreted correctly, then they can ask for the request to be reconsidered. They must write to the Individual Patient Treatment Team within 28 days and request reconsideration. The request together with the new information will be reconsidered at the next Panel meeting.

It is important to note that requests to reconsider will only be accepted from your doctor. Requests will not be accepted from the patient or any other party.

If your doctor feels that the Panel has been unfair in the process that it has applied to make a decision, then they may appeal. They must write to the IPT Team within 28 days and outline the basis of the appeal. Appeals can only be made on the basis of the process and not the decision itself.

The appeal will be considered by an Appeals Panel which will not include any member of the Panel that considered the request, although one member will attend to answer questions about the process applied in making the decision.

If the Appeals Panel feels that the process has not been properly followed it will ask the Panel to reconsider the request.

You and your doctor will be advised of the outcome within seven days of the appeal meeting.

### **Making a complaint**

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If you remain unhappy with the outcome you are entitled to pursue the matter through NHS Dorset CCG's complaints process.

### **For general information please contact:**

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**The Individual Patient Treatment Team  
NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group,  
Vespasian House,  
Barrack Road,  
Dorchester,  
DT1 1TG.**

**Telephone: 01305 368936  
Email: [DOCCG.IndividualRequest@nhs.net](mailto:DOCCG.IndividualRequest@nhs.net)**

# Patients guide to individual patient treatment requests

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This guide will help you understand more about how NHS Dorset CCG considers individual patient treatment requests.

