

30 August 2018

CCG Headquarters
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Stafford
ST16 2LP
Tel: 01785 356944

Dear

Re: Request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000
Ref no: CAS-03776-Z8R5N5-SAS

Thank you for your correspondence dated 29 August 2018 making a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 for information which may be held by NHS Stafford and Surrounds Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

You requested the following information and our response is detailed below:

I am writing to ask about the status of the prescribing policies for Flash Glucose Monitoring/FreeStyle Libre technology in NHS Stafford and Surrounds CCG.

Flash Glucose Monitoring (Flash GM) enables people with diabetes to check their glucose levels without the need to prick their fingers and draw blood. A Flash GM device, the FreeStyle Libre, was included on the drug tariff on 1st November 2017.

Flash GM has a number of benefits:

- It has been shown to better support someone's self-management of their condition as it provides a greater density of data and the ability to follow trends in glucose levels, which are not available from less frequent blood glucose testing.
- It can enable fine tuning of insulin and so reduces hypoglycaemia and increases time in target range of glucose levels (improved HbA1c).
- People using the device have been shown to test glucose levels more frequently as it is easier, quicker and less painful than routine finger prick glucose monitoring.
- Being able to check glucose levels frequently during the day is key to limiting hypoglycaemia and managing blood glucose.

Improved management could lead to fewer complications and fewer expensive ambulance callouts and hospital admissions.

Flash is currently available on prescription in Northern Ireland and Wales. However, thousands of people in Scotland and England can still only access it privately, at a cost of over £100 a month. Many areas are already following the below guidance:

- NHS England Regional Medicines Optimisation Committee (North) position statement on the use of Flash (<https://www.sps.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Flash-Glucose-monitoring-System-RMOC-Statement-final.pdf>).
- The Type 1 collaborative, a group of clinical specialists working in diabetes (<https://abcd.care/getting-freestyle-libre-your-formulary>).
- Diabetes UK's Consensus Guideline for Flash Glucose Monitoring (https://www.diabetes.org.uk/resources-s3/2017-09/1190_Flash%20glucose%20monitoring%20guideline_SB_V9%5B4%5D.pdf)

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I understand that there are significant budgetary pressures in the NHS. The Freestyle device is cost effective for people with diabetes who are treated with insulin and testing frequently. It has also been firmly established that tight glycaemic control in people with diabetes is associated with a significant reduction in serious and costly long-term diabetes related complications. Therefore focusing spend on areas like Flash GM, which gives people the tools to manage their diabetes more effectively must therefore be an absolute priority.

Please can you let me know:

- If you have agreed a policy
- What the policy is in terms of access and where this can be found publically
- If you have not agreed a policy, when you plan to do so.

At present, there is no agreed policy across the six Staffordshire CCGs (NHS Cannock Chase CCG, NHS East Staffordshire CCG, NHS North Staffordshire CCG, NHS Stafford and Surrounds CCG, NHS South East Staffordshire and Seisdon Peninsula CCG, and NHS Stoke-on-Trent CCG).

Work is ongoing to review the Freestyle Libre technology and to undertake the necessary commissioning process to determine if this is to be commissioned locally, however at present, the CCGs do not have a clear deadline as to when this will be completed. NHS Stafford and Surrounds CCG is committed to complete this review as soon as possible.

Right of appeal

Should you require any further information or clarification regarding this response, or do not feel that your request has been answered as you would expect, please contact the FOI team to discuss.

However, if you remain dissatisfied with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to request a review of our decision, this can be formally requested in writing and must be within a reasonable period of time (two calendar months) from the date this response was issued

Initially you should write to the freedom of information officer, either by email on MLCSU.FOITeam@nhs.net or post to Jubilee House, Lancashire Business Park, Leyland, PR26 6TR, specifying why you feel you have been wrongly denied access to the information requested. The freedom of information team will make sure your request is investigated by an independent reviewer who was not involved in the original consideration of your request and a written response will be provided within 20 working days.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by NHS Stafford and Surrounds CCG. The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioners Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF / www.ico.gov.uk

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<https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1151/datasets-foi-guidance.pdf>

Yours sincerely



Sally Young
Director of Corporate Services, Governance and Communications

NHS Cannock Chase CCG
NHS East Staffordshire CCG
NHS North Staffordshire CCG
NHS South East Staffordshire and Seisdon Peninsula CCG
NHS Stafford and Surrounds CCG
NHS Stoke-on-Trent CCG

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