

Area Prescribing Group report

Date: Friday 03 October 2025 **Quorate:** Yes

The items in this report are supported by the area prescribing group (APG) and approval by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB) is detailed below.

All document links provided for any CMAPG recommendations, can be found via the [legacy Pan Mersey formulary](#). The [legacy Cheshire formulary](#) will also be updated to reflect these changes.

The legacy Pan Mersey APC website is now closed. All legacy Pan Mersey APC documents are available by using the search function of the [legacy Pan Mersey formulary](#) until harmonisation concludes.

CMAPG governance documents are hosted on the [Prescribing](#) section of the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside website.

Please note there may be items that have been considered by APG but not yet approved by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB. Items will be reported in the month that they are approved.

New medicines NICE TAs

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
Ruxolitinib for treating non-segmental vitiligo in people 12 years and over RAG designation: Do Not Prescribe (DNP) APG subgroup: 12 September 2025 APG: 03 October 2025	Date of NICE TA publication: 13 Aug 2025 Approval for implementation: N/A Deadline for implementation: N/A RAG report in line with NICE TA1088 . NICE does not recommend ruxolitinib for treating non-segmental vitiligo in people 12 years and over.	None	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, approved by MOP group.

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
	A DNP RAG rating has been assigned in the formulary with a link to the NICE TA.		

New medicines other

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
NICE-approved anti-VEGF drugs and intravitreal corticosteroids used in Ophthalmic Medical Retinal conditions RAG designation: Red Task and finish group: 02 Oct 2025 APG subgroup: 10 Oct 2025 APG: 03 October 2025	Update to existing statement in line with NHS England guidance for wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Positioning of treatment options has been aligned with NHS England recommendations that promote adoption of best value biological medicines across the NHS. Faricimab is no longer listed as a first choice option for wet AMD. Aflibercept 8mg and faricimab are second line options for wet AMD. Aflibercept 2mg biosimilar is expected to be available imminently and will be added to the formulary. There will be a further review of this statement as NHS England have recently published recommendations for diabetic macular oedema (DMO) and retinal vein occlusion (RVO).	Potential for financial savings through adoption of best value products.	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, approved by MOP group.

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
Dienogest for endometriosis RAG designation: Green APG subgroup: 12 September 2025 APG: 03 October 2025	New green statement. Dienogest is recommended as a second-line treatment for endometriosis where treatment with a progesterone only pill or a levonorgestrel intra-uterine delivery system or a combined oral contraceptive pill hasn't adequately addressed the symptoms, or the patient declines surgery, or the patient has had surgery but adequate symptom control has not been achieved. Dienogest is less costly than treatments which are used next in the pathway, such as gonadorelin analogue injections and relugolix-estradiol-norethisterone tablets. The annual cost per patient is £246, compared to £939 for relugolix-estradiol-northisterone, and approximately £872 for gonaderelin analogue injections.	Potential for financial savings when used instead of gonadorelin analogue injections and relugolix-estradiol-norethisterone tablets.	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, approved by MOP group.
Actioned items for noting			
Standardised allergen extract from house dust mites sublingual lyophilisate (Acarizax) for allergic rhinitis in children aged 5 to 11 years	A grey RAG designation has been assigned pending publication of the NICE TA	N/A	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, noted by MOP group.
Estradiol gel for prevention of osteoporosis	A grey RAG designation has been assigned pending application for use	N/A	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, noted by MOP group.

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
Dydrogesterone tablets for progesterone insufficiencies and as hormone replacement therapy	A grey RAG designation has been assigned pending application for use	N/A	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, noted by MOP group.
Sildenafil citrate oromucosal spray for erectile dysfunction	A grey RAG designation has been assigned pending application for use	N/A	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, noted by MOP group.
Liothyronine oral solution for coma of myxoedema, severe chronic thyroid deficiency, and thyrotoxicosis	A grey RAG designation has been assigned pending application for use	N/A	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, noted by MOP group.
Zolpidem orodispersible tablets for insomnia	A grey RAG designation has been assigned pending application for use	N/A	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, noted by MOP group.
Diclofenac plaster for short term pain in acute strains, sprains or bruises following blunt trauma	A grey RAG designation has been assigned pending application for use	N/A	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, noted by MOP group.
Escitalopram orodispersible tablets for major depressive episodes, panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, generalised anxiety disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder in adults	A grey RAG designation has been assigned pending application for use	N/A	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, noted by MOP group.
NICE TA adherence checklist August 2025	For noting.	N/A	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, noted by MOP group.

Formulary and guidelines

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
Colesevelam and colestyramine - bile acid malabsorption (BAM)-associated diarrhoea RAG designation: Amber recommended. APG subgroup: 20 May 2025 APG: 03 Oct 2025	Updated and harmonised statement to include colestyramine and accommodate fact that SeHCAT scan should no longer be used as part of criteria for use. Legacy RAG changed from amber initiated to amber recommended as patients are taught to self-titrate dose within a prescribed range according to their symptoms. The statement includes recommendations about the monitoring of fat-soluble vitamins and states that specialists at all relevant Trusts will provide timely support for patients after commencement of treatment, without the need for formal referral, if symptoms worsen, or patients are unable to tolerate the colestyramine or colesevelam.	No anticipated financial implication.	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, approved by MOP group.
Levonorgestrel 20 microgram/24 hours, Benilexa One Handed IUD RAG designation: Green APG subgroup: 16th September 2025 APG: 03 Oct 2025	The addition of Benilexa One Handed IUD is an additional formulary choice for contraception and heavy menstrual bleeding to ensure that the full range of IUDs are available for fitters. Benilexa is reloadable and therefore has potentially less waste compared with current formulary choices, it has also almost 20% lower acquisition cost than Mirena at £71 vs £88.	Potential cost saving. Benilexa is a more cost-effective choice than Mirena with comparable indications and duration of action, and potential reduction in waste.	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, approved by MOP group.

Pyridoxine tablets 10mg, 50mg (Vitamin B6) – RAG amendment; Addition of oral liquid 100mg/5ml RAG designation: Amber recommended. APG subgroup: 16 Sep 2025 APG: 03 Oct 2025	Proposal to change RAG designation from green to amber recommended for licensed indications of isoniazid-induced neuropathy, idiopathic sideroblastic anaemia or deficiency, and the following off-label indications (list not exhaustive): - Pyridoxine dependant seizures - Complex metabolic deficiency states - Pyridoxine responsive Ornithine aminotransferase (OAT) deficiency - Primary hyperoxaluria - Non-ketotic hyperglycinaemia - Hyperprolinaemia type II - Homocystinuria - Cystathioninuria - Prevention of penicillamine-induced neuropathy in Wilson's disease These indications would be identified by a specialist and not a primary care prescriber, therefore an amber recommended designation is appropriate. The DNP position is retained for pre-menstrual syndrome and for alcohol withdrawal.	No cost impact anticipated. Some savings may be realised if patients on alternative unlicensed special strengths are changed to the 100mg/5ml special that is included in the Drug Tariff.	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, approved by MOP group.
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Actioned items for noting			
Insulins – discontinued RAG designation: Amber initiated APG subgroup: n/a APG: 03 Oct 2025	The following discontinued products have been removed from the formulary: Hypurin vials Humulin I, Humulin M3, Humulin S, Humalog Mix25 vials	N/A	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, noted by MOP group.

Antimicrobials

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
Urinary tract infection (lower) in pregnancy. RAG designation: not applicable APG subgroup: 13/08/2025 APG: 03/10/2025	Newly harmonised recommendation. Review prompted by query from primary care in Warrington. Recommendation updated with clear advice about when and why to avoid nitrofurantoin.	No anticipated financial implication. Treatment recommendations already current practice.	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 16 October 2025, approved by MOP group.