

Monday, 20 December 2021

Via email

To: General Practice Colleagues
Cc: West Yorkshire Clinical Forum Members
Clinical Directors of Primary Care Network
West Yorkshire Pharmacy Lead
West Yorkshire Primary and Community Care Programme Senior Responsible / lead
West Yorkshire Local Maternity Service Programme Director

Dear colleagues

Antiviral medicines and neutralising monoclonal antibodies (nMABs)

We wanted to update you as soon as possible on new treatment being offered to some of your most vulnerable high-risk patients in case you receive enquiries.

From Tuesday 21 December 2021, West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership will be offering antiviral medicines and neutralising monoclonal antibodies (nMABs) to clinically eligible, non-hospitalised patients with COVID-19 aged 18 or over. The medicines will be made available through COVID-19 Medicines Distribution Unit (CMDUs).

It's important to note that the criteria are not the same as those people who were previously considered clinically extremely vulnerable and advised to shield. **Please see list of conditions on the triage form attached to this email.**

The first CMDU site will be at St James Hospital in Leeds. There will be two clinics each week, on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, beginning Tuesday 21 December. Further sites will be brought online from January 2022.

Eligibility criteria

To access treatment, patients must **meet all the eligibility criteria below** and none of the exclusion criteria.

- SARS-CoV-2 infection is confirmed by PCR testing within the last five days
- Onset of symptoms of COVID-19 within the last five days
- A member of a 'highest' risk group (see triage form attached with email).



Exclusion criteria

Patients are **not** eligible for nMAB treatment in the community if they meet any of the following.

- Require hospitalisation for COVID-19
- Need supplemental oxygen specifically for managing COVID-19
- Children weighing less than 40kg
- Children aged 12 or under.

What medicines are available through the CMDUs?

- **Casirivimab and imdevimab (Ronapreve®)** is an nMAB combination that is administered intravenously over 30 minutes
- **Sotrovimab (Xevudy)** better used against the Omicron variant
- **Molnupiravir** is an antiviral administered orally but is not currently regarded as being as effective as the nMABs – so is used second line.

For patients who have been symptomatic (within the specified time-period) but are no longer symptomatic, clinical judgement will be used to determine suitability for treatment.

The referral pathway

This week, all eligible clinically vulnerable patients will receive a [NHS England letter](#) advising them of the new treatments available should they have a positive PCR diagnostic test.

The pathway for these high-risk patients is:

- Contacted by a national team to inform them they are eligible for treatment should they become COVID-19 positive
- If testing positive, they will be contacted by the CMDUs regarding treatment options, and given advice on how to access care, whilst following COVID-19 guidance. **GPs will not need to input into this process**
- They will be referred to the CMDUs by NHS England via a 'Webview' system, and advised that they should be contacted by the CMDU within 24 hours
- Can also contact NHS 111 who will direct them to the CDMU for clinical triage.

Inevitably there will be new clinically vulnerable patients not on the national database or those who just contact their GP as their first port of call. The intention is that GPs will be able to book patients on ERS directly into the CMDUs having triaged the patients.

The CMDU clinician will contact the patient by telephone to confirm eligibility for treatment and arrange treatment.

If patients are not contacted within 24 hours, they are advised to contact their GP (in hours) or NHS 111 (out of hours), who will be able to refer into the CMDU via their NHS electronic Referral Service (e-RS) or NHS Directory of Service (DoS) systems.



Further information about the clinical commissioning policy is available at <https://www.cas.mhra.gov.uk/ViewandAcknowledgment/ViewAlert.aspx?AlertID=103186>

Triage process

Please be assured the final decision on treatment does not rest with this triage process and prescribing and administration of the drugs will be done by the CMDU team. See triage form attached to the email with this letter.

We estimate that 10-15 patients per day across West Yorkshire will be offered treatment in the first week. This number will increase to around 30 patients every day when fully operational.

Should you have any questions, please contact your local medicines optimisation team. We will write to update you on further CMDU sites in the coming weeks.

Thank you for your support on this important service for some of your most vulnerable patients, at this challenging time.

Yours sincerely

Dr James Thomas



Chair of West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership Clinical Forum

Dr Steve Ollerton



Clinical Lead for West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership Primary and Community Care Programme

On behalf of West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership

More information can be found here:

- [Interim Clinical Commissioning Policy](#)
- [Patient Information](#)
- Triage form attached with email
- Frequently asked questions are below.



Frequently asked questions

How do I tell patients that they might be eligible for this pre-hospital COVID treatment?

You should not need to do anything.

A pre-treatment letter for patients will be distributed centrally by NHSE/I to individuals in the highest risk group that they may be eligible for COVID-19 treatment if they test positive. They will be provided with a PCR test to keep at home, to use if they have symptoms. There are some patient cohorts who cannot be contacted centrally, and it will be the responsibility of their specialist clinicians to inform them that they may be eligible for COVID-19 treatment if they test positive. They will need to request a PCR test to be kept at home, and phone their GP, NHS111, or even their specialist consultant for an urgent referral if they test positive.

How do I refer a patient who is COVID positive and symptomatic (within 5 days)?

Most patients will be referred to a CMDU by an NHS central mechanism, and you will not need to do anything.

However, if they do not receive any contact from a CMDU within 24 hours of being notified of a positive PCR test, they are advised to contact their GP (in hours) or NHS111 (out of hours), to refer them to a CMDU. It will then be your responsibility to refer your patients to the CMDU via NHS electronic Referral Service (e-RS).

It is important that you do not refer patients to CMDU until 24 hours after notification of a positive PCR test, to avoid duplicated referrals, as this may result in delays within the CMDU.

