

**From Director of Hospital Care
Paul Cavanagh**



By email

Chief Executives of Trusts - for cascade to:

Medical Directors
Directors of Nursing
Directors of Acute Services
Heads of Pharmacy & Medicines Management
Clinical & Social Governance Leads

Strategic Planning and Performance Group

12-22 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BS

Tel: 0300 555 0115

Email: SPPG-NICEInbox@hscni.net

Date: 6 June 2025

Director of Primary Care, SPPG - for cascade to:

Head of Pharmacy & Medicines Management

Dear Colleague,

**SERVICE NOTIFICATION FOR NICE TECHNOLOGY APPRAISAL TA1026 –
TIRZEPATIDE FOR MANAGING OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY**

Background

The Department's Medicines Policy Branch (MPB) in the Chief Medical Officer's Group has recently reviewed the above NICE guidance and has formally endorsed it as applicable in Northern Ireland.

In line with Circular HSC (SQSD) 12/22, the SPPG is required to issue a Service Notification to HSC Trusts and other relevant providers and stakeholders, including Family Practitioners, setting out the expectations for implementation.

Commissioning Arrangements

Health Minister Nesbitt has given support for the introduction of a new Regional Obesity Management Service for Northern Ireland which will enable access to a range of GLP1 agonists, including tirzepatide.

The Department is currently considering how these treatment options could be prescribed in Northern Ireland to patients for obesity management. Rollout will be carefully managed in a phased manner to ensure that HSC healthcare professionals can continue to meet the full range of health needs for all their patients.

The initial phase will focus on the development of a community-based service where patients will have access to lifestyle support as well as obesity medication, if clinically appropriate, in line with NICE guidance.

Implementation will also require consideration of financial and service requirements including clinical capacity, specialist support and the development of coordinated and sustainable service models.

Any changes to the commissioning arrangements on this treatment will be updated on the SPPG NI Formulary Managed Entry Decisions webpage:

<https://niformulary.hscni.net/managed-entry/managed-entry-decisions/>

Action required by HSCNI

Hospital clinicians should not recommend the use of these treatments for individuals for the management of obesity. While individuals may meet the NICE criteria for the management of obesity, there are currently no commissioned services to support prescribing.

GPs or other primary care prescribers should not prescribe but instead refer to this service notification if asked to prescribe any of the GLP1 agonists above. While these medicines are available for other indications i.e. management of diabetes, prescribers should ensure that individuals are considered only for this indication and fully meet the relevant NICE criteria before prescribing.

Legislative/Policy Caveats

This advice does not override or replace the individual responsibility of health professionals to make appropriate decisions in the circumstances of their individual patients, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer. This would, for example, include situations where individual patients have other conditions or complications that need to be taken into account in determining whether the NICE guidance is fully appropriate in their case.

The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 has been considered and this guidance, which is purely of a technical nature, is not regarded as falling within the scope of the Act.

Thank you for your attention with this matter. If you have any queries please email SPPG Hospital Care directorate via SPPG-NICEInbox@hscni.net in the first instance.

Yours sincerely



Paul Cavanagh
Director of Hospital Care

Cc:

Chief Medical Officer

Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

Chief Executive Patient and Client Council

Chief Executive/Postgraduate Dean, NIMDTA

Chief Executive, NICPLD

Chief Executive, NIPEC

Chief Executive, NIBTS

Chief Executive, RQIA

Chief Executive, PHA

Group Heads, SPPG

Assistant Directors of Commissioning, SPPG

NICE Managers Forum

Medicines Policy Branch SGU-NICEGuidance@health-ni.gov.uk

Andrew Dawson

Chris Garland

Jonathan Adair