

To:
Trusts Chief Executives
(for onward cascade as per distribution list)

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3 November 2017

Dear Colleague,

Prescribing of FreeStyle Libre®

FreeStyle Libre® is a flash glucose monitoring (FGM) system which can be used to aid the management of diabetes. FreeStyle Libre® will be available on the Northern Ireland Drug Tariff from 1st November 2017.

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the arrangements in place to guide the use of this device within HSC settings.

Inclusion of this device in the Drug Tariff may have a major impact on the primary care prescribing budget. It is, therefore, important that prescribing is managed appropriately, particularly in the current absence of NICE guidance, to ensure that this technology is available to those who are most likely to benefit.

The HSCB has been working collaboratively with Trust diabetes clinical staff, primary care colleagues and Diabetes UK NI, via the Regional Diabetes Network¹, to develop a regional pathway and communication for primary care practitioners.

Regional Pathway

This regional pathway will be for use by secondary care diabetes teams, to assess if *patients are suitable for a trial period of the FreeStyle Libre® system. The pathway will set out criteria, to support diabetes healthcare specialists to make an informed clinical decision about a patient's eligibility to trial the FreeStyle Libre® system.

*This includes patients who are already self-funding (or using Freestyle Libre® as part of trial), to assess if future supplies of sensors can be supplied on prescription.

The pathway should be finalised in the next few weeks and, once agreed by the Regional Diabetes Network, will be circulated to the Trusts. Trust diabetes teams will be responsible for ensuring that the necessary local arrangements are in place to implement the pathway in full.

¹ <http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/diabetes-network/>

Trust teams are encouraged to undertake assessments in line with the regionally agreed pathway.

Reporting

Once the regional pathway is operational each Trust will be required to:

- provide quarterly monitoring reports
- undertake regular audits to ensure that the pathway has been appropriately applied

Both monitoring and audit reports will be provided to HSCB via the Technology Subgroup of the Regional Diabetes Network.

Communication to primary care

HSCB has issued correspondence to GPs and community pharmacists.² This letter advises that GP practices should NOT prescribe FreeStyle Libre[®] sensors, unless the patients have been reviewed at their next routine secondary care clinic and have met the criteria under the agreed regional pathway for a trial of FreeStyle Libre[®]. This includes patients who are already using the FreeStyle Libre[®] system.

Your co-operation with the implementation of this pathway is greatly appreciated in order to ensure that the use of FreeStyle Libre[®] is appropriately managed and best use is made of limited resources.

Yours sincerely,



**Joe Brogan Assistant Director Integrated Care
Head of Pharmacy and Medicines Management**

Cc Diabetes Regional Network

² http://primarycare.hscni.net/download/DocLibrary/uncategorised/20171027_Freestyle-Libre-Letter-to-GPs-and-CPs-FINAL-V.pdf