

Executive summary UNITE Service

Severe asthma patient identification and referral

Barts Health NHS Trust & the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust and GlaxoSmithKline UK Ltd (GSK) are undertaking a Joint Working Project in North Central London & North-East London Integrated Care Systems.

The objective is:

To improve patient care through identification and review of patients with uncontrolled asthma within primary care; facilitating referral to severe asthma services, for improved access to biologic treatment for appropriate patients with severe asthma. This involves a balance of contributions with the pooling of skills, experience and resource.

The project will include identification of patients with uncontrolled asthma in participating GP practices and Primary Care Networks (PCN) within the North Central London and North-East London Integrated Care Systems (ICS). The patients will be invited for up to 2 virtual reviews by a Respiratory Nurse Advisor. Patients who remain uncontrolled after the reviews will be referred to the Severe Asthma Service.

The project will run for approximately 18 months. Start date will be September 2022.

The intended benefits are:

Patients:

- Early identification of patients with uncontrolled asthma.
- Patients with uncontrolled asthma will benefit from appropriate and timely referral to a specialist.
- Improve patient care and outcomes and manage health inequalities by improving access to biologics for appropriate patients with severe asthma.
- Remote patient consultations will provide flexibility for patients to attend.
- Patients should become better informed about their asthma and management of it. All patients will have written Personalised Asthma Action Plans.

NHS:

- Identify and manage patients at risk of unplanned hospitalisation due to exacerbations from severe asthma.
- Identify and manage patients at risk of OCS related complications due to frequent OCS use for exacerbations from severe asthma.
- Support reduction in the number of inappropriate referrals helping mitigate risk of limited capacity in the severe asthma clinics
- To align with the NHS Accelerated Access Collaborative (AAC) initiative to improve access to biologics for people with severe asthma.¹
- Support raising the profile of the severe asthma team working in community and the role they can play in delivering asthma care.

GSK:

- Demonstrate successful partnership with the NHS to improve patient care and outcomes by identification and review of patients with uncontrolled asthma; and improving access to biologics for appropriate patients with severe asthma.

- Increase in identification of patients with uncontrolled asthma and appropriate referral of patients into the specialist asthma service for specialist input. There may be an increase in asthma medication use in line with national and local guidelines, which may lead to an increase in use of GSK medicines as well as those of other pharmaceutical companies.
- Evaluation of access and uptake of biologics for severe asthma (including severe refractory eosinophilic asthma) and for appropriate patients meeting NICE criteria.
- Build trust amongst local and national stakeholders.

References:

1. NHS Accelerated Access Collaborative. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/aac/what-we-do/what-innovations-do-we-support/rapid-uptake-products/> Accessed June 2021