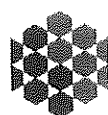


Director of Hospital Care
Paul Cavanagh



Department of
Health
An Roinn Sláinte
Máinnystrie O Poustie
www.health-ni.gov.uk

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

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Director of Primary Care, SPPG - for cascade to:

Head of Pharmacy & Medicines Management
Primary Care providers

Tel: 0300 555 0115

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Date: 03 March 2025

Chief Executive RQIA – for cascade to:

Independent Sector Providers

Dear Colleague

Update on GLP1 agonists –Liraglutide, Semaglutide and Tirzepatide for managing overweight and obesity

As you may be aware NICE have published Technology Appraisals (TAs) on a range of GLP1 agonists including liraglutide, semaglutide and tirzepatide for managing overweight and obesity. You will have received previous correspondence in regard to liraglutide and semaglutide in April 2023 and I am writing now to provide further clarity.

The Department of Health has a formal link with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) under which NICE Technology Appraisals are reviewed locally for their legal and policy applicability here, and where found to be applicable, they are endorsed for implementation within Health and Social Care (HSC) organisations.

NICE has published TA664 (liraglutide) and TA875 (semaglutide) which advises that these treatments are recommended as an option for weight management alongside a reduced-calorie diet and increased physical activity in adults. NICE recommends that these treatments should only be prescribed within a specialist multidisciplinary weight management service (including but not limited to tiers 3 and 4). Northern Ireland does not currently have a specialist weight management service and as such these treatments are not currently available within the HSC.

The Department of Health has completed a public consultation exercise seeking views on the potential establishment of a prototype Regional Obesity Management Service (ROMS) in Northern Ireland. At this time, the Minister is unable to give any commitments as to the potential future establishment of this service. Any decisions regarding future development of this service will be based on consideration of the evidence presented, availability of resources and competing priorities.

On 23 December 2024, NICE also published TA1026 which recommended tirzepatide (Mounjaro®) for the management of obesity in people with a body mass index of more than

35 and at least one weight-related illness. As this represents a significant number of people, the guidance recommends that rollout will need to be carefully managed in a phased manner to ensure that healthcare professionals can continue to meet the full range of health needs for all their patients.

Relevant stakeholders within the Department are considering how this treatment option could be prescribed appropriately to patients in NI for obesity management, including an initial focus on arrangements for those individuals most likely to benefit.

Action required by Health and Social Care

GLP1 agonists – Liraglutide, Semaglutide or Tirzepatide should **not be prescribed** for managing overweight and obesity at this time.

I recognise that following the recent NICE recommendations there will be increased interest in these treatments. If hospital clinicians, GPs or other primary care prescribers are asked to prescribe any of the GLP1 agonists above they **should not prescribe but instead refer the requesting clinician to this correspondence**. It is important that a consistent approach is taken with respect of this guidance from HSC and private providers of healthcare.

I wish to thank you for your co-operation on this matter and I will continue to keep you updated as plans for implementation progress. If you have any queries please contact SPPG-NICEinbox@hscni.net in the first instance.

Yours sincerely



pp.

Paul Cavanagh
Director of Hospital Care, SPPG

Cc Chief Medical Officer
 Chief Pharmaceutical officer
 Chief Nursing officer
 Chief AHP lead
 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 Hospital Care, SPPG