Re: Freedom of Information Request

Further to your recent Freedom of Information request regarding Freestyle Libre Glucose Monitoring, please see below our response to your request.

Request:

I am writing to ask about the status of your local prescribing policies for Flash Glucose Monitoring/FreeStyle Libre technology. Flash Glucose Monitoring (Flash GM) is a new technology that enables people with diabetes to check their glucose levels without the need to prick their fingers and draw blood. You may be aware that a Flash GM device, the FreeStyle Libre, was included on the drug tariff on 1st November 2017.

Flash GM has a number of benefits:

- It has been shown to better support someone’s self-management of their condition as it provides a greater density of data and the ability to follow trends in glucose levels, which are not available from less frequent blood glucose testing.
- It can enable fine tuning of insulin and so reduces hypoglycaemia and increases time in target range of glucose levels (improved HbA1c).
- People using the device have been shown to test glucose levels more frequently as it is easier, quicker and less painful than routine finger prick glucose monitoring.
- Being able to check glucose levels frequently during the day is key to limiting hypoglycaemia and managing blood glucose.

There are a number of areas in the country who have now agreed policies to provide access – and there are also sources of guidance about this:

- The Type 1 collaborative, a group of clinical specialists working in diabetes (https://abcd.care/getting-freestyle-libre-your-formulary).
- Diabetes UK’s Consensus Guideline for Flash Glucose Monitoring (https://www.diabetes.org.uk/resources-s3/2017-09/1190_Flash%20glucose%20monitoring%20guideline_SB_V9%5B4%5D.pdf)

I understand that there are significant budgetary pressures in the NHS. The Freestyle device is cost effective for people with diabetes who are treated with insulin and testing frequently.
It has also been firmly established that tight glycaemic control in people with diabetes is associated with a significant reduction in serious and costly long-term diabetes related complications. Therefore focusing spend on areas like Flash GM, which gives people the tools to manage their diabetes more effectively must therefore be an absolute priority.

Please can you let me know:
- If you have agreed a policy
- What the policy is in terms of access and where this can be found publically
- If you have not agreed a policy, when you plan to do so.

Response:

The GPs and nurse prescribers are asked to follow the Pan Mersey Area Prescribing Committee (APC) Formulary. Please see the link below. This is a public facing website. http://www.panmerseyapc.nhs.uk/formulary.html

Freestyle Libre® currently has a ‘grey’ status on the Pan Mersey formulary. This means that these medicines are still being evaluated according to local processes and a decision on whether to commission their use has not yet been made. They should not be prescribed in any setting. http://www.panmerseyapc.nhs.uk/recommendations/documents/PS212.pdf

The device is currently going through the APC consultation process. In the meantime Freestyle Libre® is available to buy.

Should you require any further information or clarification regarding this response or do not feel that your request has been answered as you would expect, please contact us to discuss.

We also wish to take this opportunity to inform you that a formal complaints and internal review process is available, which will be managed by a FOI Appeals Officer.

This can be formally requested and must be done within a reasonable period of time (3 calendar months) from the date this response was issued.

Where you are not satisfied with the response to a request for information that falls within the Environmental Information Regulations, you should make a representation for a review to FOI Appeals Officer, sthelensccg.foi@nhs.net within 40 days of receipt of the response.

If you are not satisfied with our review under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) for a review of your appeal decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our complaints procedure.

The ICO can be contacted at:

ICO, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF
www.ico.gov.uk

Should you need any further clarification or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me quoting the above reference.

Yours sincerely,

Angela Delea
Associate Director – Corporate Governance
NHS St Helens Clinical Commissioning Group