

## Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems – Q and A's

### 1. What about the benefits of Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems?

The member CCGs of the South West Yorkshire Area Prescribing Committee recognise Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems as an advancement in the monitoring of diabetes, and for some patients it may improve their glycaemic control and therefore long term outcomes.

However, for many patients, whilst it is a more convenient way of monitoring glycaemic control, the evidence base for long-term benefit is unclear at this time. And as Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems don't measure blood glucose levels, there may well be a need for finger prick testing as well.

In October 2017, The Northern Regional Medicines Optimisation Committee of NHS England considered the place of Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems within diabetes care. Their statement included the following –“ ... at the present point in time there are significant limitations in available clinical trial data and economic analysis that make it difficult to make an appropriate judgment as to its place in therapy.”

NHS organisations and prescribers are not obligated to supply every item listed in the Drug Tariff and can decide to restrict prescribing if an evaluation of the evidence finds that the device is not cost-effective or unsuitable for local use.

The member CCGs of the South West Yorkshire Area Prescribing Committee have a statutory responsibility to ensure we spend the local health budget for our area as effectively as possible. Sometimes this means we have to make some difficult decisions regarding what we do and don't fund. Therefore we have to consider Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems against other items competing for NHS resources in order to make a decision on the level of local funding available.

### 2. On what basis has the £365 for finger pricking been established?

The figure of £365 has been based on 4-5 finger pricks a day. [NICE Guidance 17 for Type 1 Diabetes recommends testing at least 4 times a day - [link](#)]

For patients who finger prick 8 times a day, the cost of test strips and lancets would be around £650 per year. This is still considerably cheaper than the cost of the Flash Glucose Monitoring System sensors (£910/yr), and this figure does not take account of the fact that patients may still have to finger prick whilst using a Flash Glucose Monitoring System (e.g. if driving, or unwell). Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems do not measure blood glucose levels which are why finger pricking may still be necessary.

### 3. What about the savings from reduction in complications later on?

The trials in Type 1 diabetes only looked at a 6-12 month duration in well-controlled diabetics, so the evidence cannot currently indicate that Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems will reduce complications later in life for all Type 1 diabetics. Further evidence is still required in poorly controlled Type 1

diabetics over a longer time period before we know if there will be an impact on long-term complications.

4. If I am already using a Flash Glucose Monitoring System as I have been buying it privately, can I now get it on prescription?

The decisions and criteria regarding which patients will benefit most from using a Flash Glucose Monitoring System will not be based on what has already been purchased, but on the clinically based criteria agreed for local NHS funding. Therefore it is possible that once our policy is agreed, privately paying patients will not receive Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems on an NHS prescription.

5. How will you select patients eligible to receive Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems on NHS prescriptions?

The CCGs will be advised by the local diabetes specialists and the limited available evidence as to which patients are most likely to benefit from using Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems whilst maintaining a financial balance for the CCGs. These criteria have not yet been agreed.

We will also consider the views and policies of our neighbouring CCGs to ensure continuity of care across NHS boundaries.