

Making Outcomes-Based Payment a Reality in the NHS: Cancer Research UK and Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership

Project Background

Recent years have seen real improvements in UK patients' access to newly-launched cancer drugs. However, there remain regulatory and commercial challenges to ensuring patient access to new treatment options is as quick and comprehensive as possible.

Outcome-based payment (OBP) links a drug's price to the outcomes it delivers for patients in the NHS. Cancer Research UK and GMHSC Partnership believe OBP holds exciting potential to keep improving patient access to evidence-based and cost-effective drugs. We are therefore jointly undertaking a multi-phase programme of research into the use of OBP in the NHS in England.

Methodology

The study is expected to be conducted in three phases. We are being advised by a steering group, which includes experts from Cancer Research UK, Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, the Department of Health and Social Care, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, NHS England, Public Health England, industry, clinicians and people affected by cancer.

The first phase of the research concluded with the publication in February 2019 of a research report, "Making Outcome-Based Payment a Reality in the NHS"¹, based on original research undertaken by the Office of Health Economics, RAND Europe, and King's College London.

The report found that wider use of OBP in the NHS is possible and desirable for some (but not all) new cancer drugs. It is best-suited to cases where substantial uncertainty remains about a drug's effectiveness even after clinical trials data are available. The report also defined an "outcomes framework" with the four treatment outcomes we found matter most to patients and carers: survival; disease progression, recurrence or relapse; long-term side effects; and return to normal activities.

We are now undertaking a second research phase, which will address key uncertainties and barriers to implementing OBP identified in the first phase report. It will focus on identifying patient outcomes data already available within the NHS, and the practicalities of collecting any additional data needed to administer an OBP scheme based on the outcomes framework from the first phase.

Subject to an assessment of viability, the study's third phase will carry out a live pilot of an OBP scheme within Greater Manchester, based on the principles set out in the first phase report. The steps needed to prepare for this will be established as part of the second phase of research.

Timelines

We are currently producing a research brief for the second phase, and we anticipate opening the call for research proposals by the end of April 2019. We hope to begin the second research phase by August 2019 with a view to producing a final output before the end of March 2020. Details of the third phase pilot will be confirmed following the conclusion of the second phase of research.

For more information, please contact alexandra.feast@cancer.org.uk or duncan.sim@cancer.org.uk.

¹ Cole, A., Cubi-Molla, P., Pollard, J., Sim, D., Sullivan, R., Sussex, J. and Lorgelly, P. (2019). Making Outcome-Based Payment a Reality in the NHS. Available at: https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/sites/default/files/obp_final_report_pdf.pdf