

CANCER DRUGS FUND

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For members to be aware of proposals for the Cancer Drugs Fund and other supporting measures around cancer services.
- 1.2 Dr Nonnie Crawford, Locality Director of Public Health, Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust will be in attendance at the meeting to take members through the consultation document.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Department for Health is consulting on proposals for establishment of a Cancer Drugs Fund. The consultation sets out the context and case for change, the objectives for the Fund, and the implications these have for the structure of the Fund.

3. Cancer Drugs Fund

- 3.1 The Fund is intended as a means of improving patient access to cancer drugs prior to the anticipated reform of arrangements for branded drug pricing on expiry of the current Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme (PPRS) at the end of 2013.
- 3.2 Decisions on the implementation of the Cancer Drugs Fund will be taken following this consultation.
- 3.3 A copy of the Consultation is attached as Appendix A and is available at the link below:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_120931.pdf

4. Interim Cancer Drugs Fund

- 4.1 In July 2010 it was announced that an Interim Cancer Drugs Fund would start on 1 October. The interim fund of £50 million runs until the end of March 2011 when the full Cancer Drugs Fund is introduced.
- 4.2 A report by National Cancer Director Professor Sir Mike Richards on international variations in drug usage shows the UK's uptake of new drugs falls behind other European countries. The funding is for cancer patients to access drugs now to help extend life or improve quality of

life, ahead of longer term plans to change the way the NHS pays for drugs. The interim measure precedes the Cancer Drugs Fund due to commence in April 2011. Doctors will be put in charge of deciding how the funding is spent for their patients locally based on the advice of cancer specialists.

5. Office for National Statistics data on cancer survival

5.1 On 7 September 2010 the Office for National Statistics published new data showing that cancer survival rates have improved, although there is still a North South divide.

5.2 The index has been designed for routine monitoring of the local effectiveness of cancer services. It is adjusted for differences between PCTs in the profile of their resident cancer patients by age, sex and type of cancer.

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/canpct0910.pdf>

5.3 The figures show that:

- Overall, the one-year cancer survival index for England has increased during the period 1996–2006, from 61.8 per cent in 1996 to 65.0 per cent in 2006
- Geographic inequalities in cancer survival are persistent over time. In 1996, a clear North South gradient existed. This is still evident in 2006, but it is less marked

6. Signs & Symptoms Campaign

6.1 On 27 September 2010 a signs and symptoms campaign was launched which will focus on breast, lung and bowel cancers alerting people to the early signs of cancer and encourage them to get checked out.

6.2 From January 2011 a range of local campaigns - 59 in total - will be launched, focusing on the three big killers: breast cancer, bowel cancer and lung cancer. Local areas have each been given a share of £9 million in funding for their campaigns. At the same time as running these local projects, the Department of Health will be trialling centrally-led campaign activity in two regions, to raise awareness of bowel cancer symptoms and encourage people to visit the doctor earlier.

6.3 The campaign will run alongside the Cancer Drug Fund and review of the Cancer Reform Strategy¹.

¹ The Cancer Reform Strategy 2007 builds on the NHS Cancer Plan in 2000 and set a direction for cancer services for the next five years.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Members are asked to note the proposals around cancer services.

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