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Pwyllgor Gwasanaethau Iechyd
Arbenigol Cymru (PGIAC)
Welsh Health Specialised
Services Committee (WHSSC)

Your ref/eich cyf: P-04-460
Our ref/ein cyf: 13/03/AM2618
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Mr William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Thursday 6th June 2013

Dear William

Re: Allocation of funding for specialised medicines to patients

Thank you for your letter dated 21st March 2013. Please accept my apologies for the delay in providing you with a response.

The Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) as a Joint Committee of the seven Local Health Boards is governed by the same arrangements as the Health Boards with regards to specialised and high cost drugs.

For drugs approved by NICE via Technology Appraisal Guidance (TAG) funding is mandated through existing NHS policy. Drugs that have not been considered by NICE are considered by the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG). This includes drugs newly available which are not scheduled to be considered by NICE within a 12 month period. The WHSSC Medical Director and WHSSC Director of Finance are members of the AWMSG and WHSSC also has a representation on the AWMSG Steering Committee.

When a clinician believes that a patient should receive a specialised treatment for which there is not an existing policy e.g. for a drug which has not previously been assessed by NICE or AWMSG they can make a request to AWMSG to appraise the drug. In accordance with the *All Wales Policy: Making Decisions on Individual Patient Funding Requests (IPFR)*, funding can also be considered by the All Wales IPFR Panel on the basis of

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Chair/Cadeirydd: *Professor Mike Harmer*

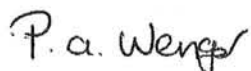
Interim Director of Specialised and Tertiary Services/Cyfarwyddwr Dros Dro y Gwasanaethau Arbenigol a Thrydyddol: *Mr Stephen Harry*

individual clinical exceptionalty. In order for the request to be considered by the All Wales IPFR panel on the basis of exceptionalty, an IPFR form must be completed by the referring clinician which clearly demonstrate why funding should be provided as an exception. The evidence of exceptionalty should include evidence base considerations, economic considerations and ethical considerations. Social factors will not be considered when making decisions on IPFR.

Where the intervention is not specifically drug related (i.e. a technology) WHSSC have implemented a process of evidence evaluation and assessment which considers the evidence for clinical and cost effectiveness. An evidence-based recommendation is then made to the Joint Committee of WHSSC whether to approve or not approve the resources required to implement the technology.

The information that you provided refers to drugs being available in England but not in Wales. We are aware that England has a separate high cost drugs fund relating to Cancer Treatments (The Cancer Drugs Fund). The decision not to implant a Cancer Drugs fund in Wales has already been made by WAG

Yours sincerely



pp.
Mr Stephen Harrhy
Interim Director of Specialised and Tertiary Services

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