

## What if I am not happy with the decision?

There are two things you can do if you are not happy with the decision:

- You can ask your GP to apply again with more clinical information. The decision as to whether NHS North Central London will fund your application is based on clinical evidence, so if you submit new evidence we will re-examine your case
- You can appeal. Your appeal will be reviewed by a separate Appeals Panel. This Panel cannot approve funding, but it can order your case to be re-reviewed if it feels the original decision was not based on sound clinical evidence.

## What if there is new information I think the IFR panel should have been aware of?

Your GP or consultant, in discussion with you, can submit new information regarding your medical condition or the treatment you are requesting at any time.

If the Consultant in Public Health (or their deputy) and the Primary Care Trust's IFR Manager consider that this information might have changed the decision that was previously reached, then the case will be reconsidered following the process outlined above.

## More information

For more information, please go to [www.ncl.nhs.uk/publications.aspx](http://www.ncl.nhs.uk/publications.aspx).

Email any queries to [ncl.ifr@nhs.net](mailto:ncl.ifr@nhs.net) or call the PoLCE/IFR enquiries line on 0207 685 6153 /6154

## Information for GPs only

Please send your completed IFR form to the NHS North Central London IFR Team at [ncl.ifr@nhs.net](mailto:ncl.ifr@nhs.net)



# Individual Funding Requests (IFRs)

## A guide for patients

This leaflet tells you what happens if your GP or consultant thinks that you might benefit from a treatment that is not usually available on the NHS.



## What are Individual Funding Requests (IFRs)?

IFRs are treatments which are not usually available from your local NHS, but which your clinician (usually a GP or consultant)



considers you may benefit from. They can then request this treatment for you, through an IFR.

The same IFR policy is used across NHS North Central London to ensure we treat patients consistently and fairly, no matter where they live.

This guide describes the process for IFR applications made by clinicians for you.

### Why are they needed?

NHS North Central London has a legal duty to spend the money it receives from the Government in a fair and efficient way, taking into account the health needs of the whole local community.

As there is only a set amount of money available to spend, difficult decisions sometimes have to be made about which treatments to fund. IFRs allow for extraordinary circumstances to be reviewed on a patient by patient basis.

### When can an IFR be made?

IFRs are made when your GP or consultant wants you to have a treatment or drug that is not normally available.

In order for funding to be considered, there must be an unusual or unique clinical factor about your case which means that you will have a specific benefit from that treatment:

- You are significantly different to the general population of patients with the condition in question
- You are likely to gain significantly more benefit than might be expected from the average patient with the condition

The fact that a treatment is likely to be beneficial to you is not, in itself, a basis for funding.

It is for your GP or consultant to make the case for funding. You cannot apply yourself.

### How funding is applied for?

Firstly, your GP or consultant will speak to you if they consider a treatment outside of the normal scope of NHS funding to be suitable. They will then complete an IFR form and send it to the NHS North Central London IFR Team.

This application will be reviewed by the IFR Team to see if the treatment you are applying for will be effective and that you qualify. This review is done by a panel made up of specialists, clinicians and experts in their field. In order to provide the required



level of information, some conditions may require additional information submitted by your doctor along with your funding request.

Your GP will then be informed by the IFR Team if funding for your treatment is agreed.

### How does the panel make individual decisions?

Panel members have the expertise to assess the clinical information and evidence that your doctor has provided. The panel operates under an agreed ethical framework which states that any decisions must be fair, consistent and equitable.

The panel approves funding for the treatment if the following criteria are met:

- The patient has a rare condition for which there is no policy
- Exceptional clinical circumstances are demonstrated
- Treatment is justified in light of the clinical benefits likely to be gained.

### How long does this take?

In routine cases NHS North Central London will:

- Acknowledge the request from your GP within three days
- Make a decision within a month
- Reply to your GP with the decision within five days of the IFR Panel

Urgent cases are handled more quickly.