

**20 December 2024**

## **Expanding access to the weight loss drug Tirzepatide – update for NENC GP practices**

NICE are set to formally launch its technology appraisal (TA) for Tirzepatide on 23 December 2024.

The TA outlines that people aged 18 or over who are living with obesity and have a body mass index (BMI) of more than 35 and have one qualifying weight-related comorbidity will have access to the weight loss drug Tirzepatide, either through a specialist weight management service or primary care. There is a lower BMI threshold for people from South Asian, Chinese, other Asian, Middle Eastern, Black African or African-Caribbean ethnic backgrounds (usually reduced by 2.5 kg/m<sup>2</sup>).

It is estimated that around 3.4 million people in England are eligible for the drug. The roll out of Tirzepatide will be carefully managed to ensure healthcare professionals can continue to meet the full range of health needs of all their patients. Initially, only those with the highest clinical need will be prioritised to receive the medication while the NHS tests a variety of new services to care for people living with obesity. This will include prioritising people who are already receiving care in specialist weight management services (SWMS). Patients will be able to access Tirzepatide, where clinically appropriate, within 90 days of NICE's final guidance being published in SWMS and 180 days in primary care.

It is anticipated that the announcement highlighting Tirzepatide will be accessible from primary care will generate a significant amount of enquires to primary care during a time when there is significant pressure on the system.

To support primary care, the Healthy Weight and Treating Obesity workstream in conjunction with primary care leads have developed a self-referral portal that patients can be signposted to register their interest in weight loss drugs and lifestyle changes.

The self-referral portal is part of a pathway development to provide the appropriate access and wraparound care that is a requirement of the NICE TA for Tirzepatide and other weight loss drugs.

## **Self Referral Portal NENC**

The form will take approximately **5-10 minutes** for patients to complete. The ICB will get back in touch with the patients within 4-6 weeks to invite them to an engagement session to give them more information about the weight loss medicines and the next steps.

Please see the URL link and QR code below for the weight loss drugs and lifestyle changes – self referral portal:

<https://cdn.inhealthcare.co.uk/nencmounjaro/index.html>



Please share this link and QR code with your patients. But please make sure that the patients scan the correct QR code.

## **Health Weight and Treating Obesity workstream**

The ICB recognises the challenge of meeting the needs of our population, through the Healthy Weight and Treating Obesity workstream. As part of the workstream the ICB are utilising a whole systems approach to develop a Healthy Weight & Treating Obesity strategy, which will focus on primary prevention as well as treatment. Alongside this we are working closely with NHSE on the implementation of the NICE TA for Tirzepatide. This work will take place in early 2025, if you are interested in supporting this work, please get in touch [necsu.healthyweight@nhs.net](mailto:necsu.healthyweight@nhs.net)