



# Patient guide to Individual Patient Funding Requests (IPFR)

Your clinician thinks that you would benefit from a treatment that is not usually provided on the NHS in Wales. They have asked that a special request is made to fund this treatment for you. This is called an Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR).



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## What is an individual patient funding request?

Every year, Health Boards receive money from the Welsh Government to pay for healthcare for everyone who lives in Wales and is entitled to NHS care.

Our job is to get the best value for this money by spending it wisely on your behalf.

Demand for healthcare is growing. New and often expensive treatments are becoming available almost every week. However, we only have a set amount of money to spend and so very difficult decisions sometimes have to be made.

There may be cases where a treatment is not available because there is limited evidence for how well it works, or because it is very high cost and does not offer good value for money for taxpayers and the NHS.

This leaflet explains how your clinician can ask us, on your behalf, to fund a treatment that would not normally be provided on the NHS in Wales. More information on this process is available on our website: <http://www.whssc.wales.nhs.uk/home>

## When can an individual patient funding request be made?

An individual patient funding request can be made for a treatment that is not routinely offered by the NHS in Wales when;

- Your clinician believes that your clinical circumstances are clearly different to

other patients with the same condition, and;

- When there is a clinical reason why your condition would respond differently to other patients which means you would gain more clinical benefit from that treatment.

We would also need information to show that the cost of the treatment for your condition is reasonable.

## The application process

You and your clinician will agree together that a request should be made. Your clinician will complete the application form on your behalf.



The form will have details such as your current health, what treatments you've had and details of any alternative treatments that may be available. It will also provide details on what will happen if you don't receive the treatment requested.

As part of the application process some NHS staff may need to access your health records and may need to contact other health professionals who have been involved in your care. Your details will also be stored on a confidential database which

will be used to help inform future planning requirements.

### How will the decision be made?

The application will be considered by an independent panel who have not been involved in your treatment. Your personal details will be kept confidential.

The panel is made up of doctors, nurses, public health experts, pharmacists and lay members.

Panel members have the skills and knowledge to consider the information provided by your clinician and must make sure decisions made are fair, consistent and equitable, and in line with the principles of the IPFR policy.



When considering applications the panel will only consider the clinical evidence provided. They will not consider any non-clinical circumstances. For example, factors such as a patient's ability to work or study, care for dependents, or meet financial commitments can't be considered as part of the IPFR process.

The decision is based on your clinical circumstances only, which ensures the IPFR

process is fair, equitable and non-discriminatory.

When the panel has made a decision on your application a letter will be sent to the clinician to let them know the outcome of the funding request.

You will receive a letter informing you that a decision has been made. However, you will not be informed of the decision as following feedback from patients and clinicians it was felt that these matters are best discussed directly between patients and their clinicians. Your clinician will contact you to discuss the decision and the next steps in your care.

### What happens if the panel decline the request?

If your application is unsuccessful, your clinician will discuss with you the reasons for the decision and what other treatment options may be available to you. If you and your clinician think that the IPFR process hasn't been followed correctly, your clinician can request a review of the process followed on your behalf.

Your clinician will need to complete a request for a review form, outlining the grounds for requesting the review in line with the IPFR policy. This must be done within 25 working days of the date of the decision letter.

If a request for a review is received, a review panel will look at the case. The review panel cannot change the outcome of

the decision, but if they don't think that the panel followed the process correctly, they can ask the IPFR panel to review your application again.

The review panel will not consider any new information. If new information becomes the case will be reviewed by the IPFR panel.

### Making a complaint

If you remain unhappy after your review decision, you have the right to refer the matter to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. Further information on how to do this is available on their website [www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk)

### Where can I find more information?

For general information on making an IPFR application, please contact:  
The Patient Care Team  
Welsh Health Specialised Services  
Unit G1, The Willowford, Main Avenue,  
Treforest Industrial Estate, Treforest,  
Pontypridd, CF37 5YL

Telephone: 01443 443443 ext. 78123  
Email: [whssc.ipc@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:whssc.ipc@wales.nhs.uk)

A short video explaining the process can also be accessed via the link below;  
<https://www.awttc.org/ipfr>