Haringey CCG has a 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 we sometimes have to make difficult decisions about which treatments can be provided.

Some treatments of limited clinical value which are commonly requested and which are not routinely funded by the CCG are described in our POLCE policy.

In some circumstances, your doctor may think that you have exceptional clinical circumstances and may therefore benefit from a treatment which is not routinely provided.

Requests for such treatments must be made by your doctor through an Individual Funding Request (IFR).

**When can an Individual Funding Request (IFR) be made?**
There are two situations when it is possible to make an IFR:

- When the CCG does not have a policy stating who is eligible for the treatment that is being requested
- When the CCG has a policy - but your doctor thinks that your clinical circumstances do not meet the policy’s definition of who is eligible for the treatment.

**How is an Individual Funding Request made?**
If your doctor agrees that a treatment would be of benefit to you then they can then make a request to the CCG for funding on your behalf.

IFR applications must be submitted using a standard form. Your doctor will be asked to describe the following:

- Your personal clinical circumstances
- How they think the treatment will benefit you
- Evidence that it is both safe and effective
- How commonly your medical condition is seen in the local community.

For treatments listed in the POLCE or other specific policy documents your GP will be able to assess your clinical circumstances against the agreed criteria for approving treatment.

**How is an IFR managed?**
The forms are received by the IFR team who log every application and check to see whether there is enough clinical information for the CCG to reach a decision. If the
application is for a treatment which is covered by the POLCE or other policies then the team checks whether the case meets the funding criteria listed in that policy.

Based on this first check the CCG will decide whether funding can be approved or not. This will depend on whether or not the application meets the funding criteria in our policies.

For these cases the decision will be communicated back to your GP within two weeks of the application form being received.

For more complicated cases, where a decision cannot easily be made based on our policies, the CCG lead may recommend that your case be taken to an IFR panel for a final decision.

**IFR Panels**
The IFR panel is chaired by a doctor or a lay representative and supported by a pharmacist and a senior manager. All panel members are nominated by the CCG.

Individual cases are presented to the panel by leads from local Prescribing and Public Health teams or by an IFR team member as appropriate to the individual case.

The IFR panel will apply standard criteria to their decision making and will need to hear evidence demonstrating that the requested treatment is both safe and clinically effective, that it is affordable, and that your clinical circumstances are exceptional so that they can justify treating you when others would not get the treatment.

In deciding whether your clinical circumstances are 'exceptional' the IFR Panel will consider two questions:

- **Are there any clinical features that make you significantly different from others who have the same clinical condition?**

- **Are you likely to obtain significantly more clinical benefit from the desired treatment compared to other patients with the same condition?**

The IFR Panel’s decision will be emailed to your doctor within 24 hours so that they can continue to plan your treatment. A more detailed letter explaining the reasons behind the Panel’s decision will be sent to your doctor within two weeks.

**Can an appeal be made against an IFR decision?**
You and your doctor have the right to appeal against any IFR decision taken by the CCG. An appeal is made by your doctor to the IFR team. Appeals may be considered if you think that the CCG has not correctly followed its IFR policy, or if you think that the CCG has not considered all the relevant clinical information relating to your case. If your doctor presents new clinical information in support of your case then this will be treated as a new application.
The IFR Pathway

Application
- Your doctor recommends that you have a treatment which is not routinely funded and makes an IFR application on your behalf

IFR decision
- The CCG reviews the application against existing policy and makes a funding decision

IFR Panel
- If a decision can't be easily made against existing policy your case may be heard by an IFR panel who will consider: the safety and clinical effectiveness of the treatment; any clinical circumstances which make your case exceptional; and overall cost effectiveness

Appeal
- You have the right to make an appeal against the decision on the basis that either the proper process wasn't followed, or that relevant clinical information was not considered

Contact details for the IFR Team
If you want to know what our policy is on a particular drug or treatment, or you have a question about the IFR process in Haringey, please contact:

Individual Funding Requests (IFR) Team
North and East London Commissioning Support Unit
Clifton House
75 – 77 Worship Street
London EC2A 2EJ

Telephone: 020 3688 1290

Email: ncl.ifr@nhs.net