

Charter House
Parkway
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL8 6JL

23 June 2025

<https://hertsandwestessex.ics.nhs.uk>

Dear GP/PCN,

Implementation of Tirzepatide in Primary Care to Support Weight Management for Appropriate Eligible Patients

Following NICE guidance issued in December 2024 (TA1026), the NHS is introducing Tirzepatide (Mounjaro®) for the treatment of obesity — not just in specialist services, but within primary care settings for a prioritised limited, high-risk cohort of patients who meet medical eligibility criteria as set out in Appendix 1. This expands access to effective pharmacological treatment beyond previous GLP-1 agonists, which were limited to Tier 3 Weight Management Services.

From 23 June 2025, GPs across Hertfordshire and West Essex will be able to refer patients into a new primary care led community-based service which the ICB is in the process of commissioning. As the numbers for this high-risk cohort are small, it has been agreed following engagement with all stakeholders including LMC, to commission the service at scale in primary care. In line with national requirements, this service will only be available to eligible, high-risk patients and must be used alongside a structured lifestyle support programme. GP practices **should not initiate Tirzepatide for weight management** outside of the newly commissioned service.

We advise GP practices to refer eligible patients by submitting a prior approval application to HWE ICB via priorapproval.hweicb@nhs.net.

The Prior Approval form can be found at <https://www.hweclinicalguidance.nhs.uk/clinical-policies/tirzepatide-mounjaro-for-weight-management-primary-care-cohort/>

The ICB will confirm eligibility and provide the list of eligible patients to the new service once a provider has been appointed, and the service has launched.

Dr Jane Halpin, Chief Executive

Rt. Hon. Paul Burstow, Chair

Please refer to the guidance in Appendix 1 of the letter when considering if a patient is eligible. To support general practice, we have also developed communications for patients which are being finalised and will be shared with practices.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact priorapproval.hweicb@nhs.net

Kind regards,



Avni Shah

Director of Primary Care Transformation



Dr Rachel Joyce

Medical Director

Dr Jane Halpin, Chief Executive

Rt. Hon. Paul Burstow, Chair



Appendix 1

In line with this national rollout, up to 220,000 people across England are expected to access Tirzepatide over the next three years. At the end of this period, NICE will formally review the outcomes and may recommend broader access depending on clinical effectiveness, uptake, and system impact.

Eligibility Criteria

This service is limited to NHS England's Primary Care Cohort 1:

- BMI $\geq 40^*$, **and**
- **Four or more** of the following weight-related health conditions:
 - Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus
 - Established diagnosis of type 2 diabetes, documented in the clinical record
 - Hypertension
 - Established diagnosis of hypertension, **requiring blood pressure-lowering therapy**
 - Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease (ASCVD)
 - Includes ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease (e.g. stroke or TIA), peripheral vascular disease, or heart failure
 - (Excludes atrial fibrillation and valvular heart disease)
 - Dyslipidaemia
 - Defined by lipid-lowering therapy, or by any of the following:
 - LDL cholesterol ≥ 4.1 mmol/L
 - HDL cholesterol < 1.0 mmol/L (men) or < 1.3 mmol/L (women)
 - Fasting triglycerides ≥ 1.7 mmol/L (where available)
 - Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA)
 - Diagnosis confirmed via sleep study **and with treatment indicated** (e.g. meets criteria for CPAP or equivalent therapy)
- * Use a lower BMI threshold (usually reduced by 2.5 kg/m²) for people from South Asian, Chinese, other Asian, Middle Eastern, Black African or African-Caribbean ethnic backgrounds

Please note: Meeting diagnostic labels alone may not equate to meeting criteria; clinical thresholds must be satisfied. **Tirzepatide will not be suitable for all eligible patients**, and clinical discretion must be applied.

Prescribing and Referral Process

Dr Jane Halpin, Chief Executive

Rt. Hon. Paul Burstow, Chair

From 23rd June 2025, patients who appear to meet the eligibility criteria may be referred to the service by their GP or healthcare professional, following a shared decision-making conversation.

Whilst the service is being commissioned from the 23rd June 2025, GPs will be able to refer eligible patients by submitting a prior approval application to HWE ICB via priorapproval.hweicb@nhs.net. The ICB will confirm eligibility and provide the list of eligible patients to the new service once it launches. Once the new service launches, GPs and healthcare professionals will be able to refer directly to the new service.

Referrers are asked to use appropriate SNOMED codes specified by NHSE.

Final eligibility and prescribing decisions will be made by the delivery team following a structured clinical review.

Patients must also engage with Behavioural Support for Obesity Prescribing (BSOP) — a structured lifestyle programme that includes support with nutrition, physical activity, and behaviour change. This wraparound care is a requirement under the NICE guidance and must be provided alongside Tirzepatide.

Referral to BSOP will be made by the new community service at the point of Tirzepatide initiation, and patients are expected to engage for the full duration of the 9-month programme for treatment to continue.

Key Considerations for Clinicians

Tirzepatide is not intended as a first-line or general weight loss treatment, and prescribing must only occur within the approved clinical pathway.

Tirzepatide is a black triangle medication, and the priority cohort have significant multi-morbidity. While there is potential for pharmacists to support delivery in future, they currently do not have access to the full patient record — a requirement for safe prescribing under this programme.

GPs and primary care clinicians are responsible for identifying potentially eligible patients and initiating referral. However, final prescribing decisions will be made by the delivery team following further clinical review.

Establishing this service within primary care at pace — including integration with mandatory wraparound support — requires careful planning and oversight. As a **locally commissioned pathway**, delivery models may vary across systems to reflect local infrastructure and service arrangements. Local evaluation of outcomes and national evaluation of different delivery models will inform future delivery.

- **Alternative Weight Management Services**

Patients who are not eligible for Tirzepatide for the management of obesity, or for whom it is not clinically appropriate, should be offered access to the wide range of NHS weight management support available.

- a. [Healthier You NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme](#) - a 9-month programme offering face-to-face group sessions programme, or digital 1:1 support. It helps people at risk of type 2 diabetes make sustainable lifestyle changes to improve health and support weight loss where needed.
- b. [NHS National Digital Weight Management Programme](#) - a 12-week programme for patients living with obesity, Diabetes and/or hypertension.
- c. [My Healthy Weight Programme](#) provided by TBC Healthcare - a 14-week programme for Hertfordshire residents living with obesity and who have not recently attended a free 12-week weight loss programme. Patients can self-refer via the TBC website.

- d. **Shape Up Programme** delivered by Watford Football Club – a 12-week programme for Hertfordshire residents or patients living with obesity.
- e. **Essex Wellbeing Service** provide a range of programmes and support to residents of West Essex with weight loss and other healthy lifestyle changes.
- f. **Specialist Weight Management Services** – a 12-month intensive support delivered by a team of specialists, including Dietitians, Physical Activity Specialists and Psychologists.

My Healthy Weight Plus + - for Hertfordshire residents, this specialist service is provided by TBC Healthcare.

Morelife - for West Essex residents

If patients request Tirzepatide but do not meet the eligibility criteria, they should be supported in accessing these lifestyle-based services and reminded that prescribing is governed by strict national guidance.

Additional information and patient resources can be found on the Herts & West Essex ICB website: [Weight loss injections - Herts and West Essex ICS](#)

Please note, this update relates only to Tirzepatide for the management of obesity. For local guidance on GLP-1 medications for type 2 diabetes, please see:

- [Dual GIP with GLP-1 RA or GLP-1 RA with insulin guidance document](#)
- [Dual GIP with GLP2 RA or GLP-1 RA comparison document](#)

