

Eluned Morgan AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Russell George MS
Chair,
Health and Social Care Committee

SeneddHealth@senedd.wales

27 November 2023

Dear Russell,

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is established to provide independent, expert and impartial advice on whether the benefits of new medicines are in sufficient balance with their costs to represent a cost effective use of NHS resources.

We rely on the expert advice of NICE as an internationally renowned health technology appraisal body. All medicines that have been recommended by NICE or the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG) are routinely available in Wales where clinically appropriate.

The independent role of NICE and AWMSG means it would not be appropriate for the Welsh Government to intervene in their appraisal processes or to comment on their consultations.

The cystic fibrosis treatments Kaftrio, Symkevi, Orkambi and Kalydeco are all routinely available in Wales for all their licensed indications in accordance with the commercial access agreement reached between the Welsh Government and the manufacturer, Vertex Pharmaceuticals in 2020. A condition of that agreement was that Vertex would engage in an appraisal of Kaftrio, Symkevi and Orkambi in order to determine the effectiveness of these treatments and ensure they were in fair balance with the price paid by the NHS.

On 3 November, NICE published draft guidance on the use of Kaftrio, Symkevi and Orkambi in which they did not recommend the use of these treatments because “the price offered by the manufacturer was substantially above the range NICE considers an acceptable use of NHS resources”.

There is scope for Vertex to consider NICE’s findings and an opportunity for them to offer a price which presents better value for money to the NHS.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

NICE will update its guidance following the consultation, which ends later this month. A decision by NICE not to recommend the use of these treatments will not affect anyone currently receiving them or anyone who commences treatment ahead of NICE's final recommendation.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

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Minister for Health and Social Services