

Area Prescribing Group report

Date: 04 September 2026 **Quorate:** Yes

The items in this report are supported by the area prescribing group (APG) and approval by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB) is detailed below.

All document links provided for any CMAPG recommendations can be found in the [Cheshire and Merseyside formulary](#) which will also be updated to reflect these changes.

The legacy Cheshire formulary, and the legacy Pan Mersey APC website and formulary are now closed. Legacy documents are available by using the search function of the [Cheshire and Merseyside formulary](#).

CMAPG governance documents are hosted on the [Prescribing](#) section of the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside website.

Please note there may be items that have been considered by APG but not yet approved by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB. Items will be reported in the month that they are approved.

Formulary and guidelines

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
Preservative-free eye drops – to remove words “unit dose” from preservative-free eye drops approved on the formulary. RAG designation. Various APG subgroup: 18 Aug 2026 APG: 04 Sep 2026	An increasing number of preservative-free drops are available in multi-use bottles which are more environmentally friendly and, in some cases, more cost-effective. Removing restriction to unit-dose products only will also help during supply shortages as will allow access to a wider range of substitute products. It also provides patients an alternative option if they find using	It is not possible to estimate potential cost savings, but it is anticipated these will accrue through Scriptswitch messaging advising prescribers of most cost-effective options.	MOP: 17 Sept 2026, approved by MOP group.

	unit-dose eye drops difficult (e.g. dexterity issues). ScriptSwitch messaging on relevant products that indicates least expensive container for a variety of products will be made.		
Minoxidil topical formulations – addition to formulary of all formulations RAG designation: DNP APG subgroup: 18 Aug 2026 APG: 04 Sep 2026	The below products are not listed under Drugs, Medicines and Other Substances not to be ordered under a General Medical Services Contract and feature in the NHS Drug Tariff (unlike other topical formulations) and therefore presents risk these will be prescribed on NHS if not designated DNP in formulary: Minoxidil 5% foam 60g £25.94 Cat C Regaine for Men Extra Strength 120g (2x60g) £39.71 Cat C Regaine for Women Once a Day 180g (3x60g) £59.68 Cat C Regaine for Men Extra Strength Cheshire and Merseyside commissioning policy: states medications used to treat hair loss e.g. minoxidil are not recommended to be routinely prescribed at NHS expense. ScriptSwitch message in place.	Reduction of up to £14,528 per annum if all NHS prescribing of minoxidil foam is discontinued	MOP: 17 Sept 2026, approved by MOP group.

Tuzulby brand of methylphenidate 20mg, 30mg, 40mg prolonged-release chewable tablets – addition to formulary. RAG designation: Purple APG subgroup: 18 Aug 2026 APG: 04 Sep 2026	This chewable prolonged release formulation offers an alternative method of administration for those with swallowing difficulties and/or sensory needs.	Cost is comparable overall with existing brands currently on the formulary.	MOP: 17 Sept 2026, approved by MOP group.
Fenofibrate to Reduce Progression of Diabetic Retinopathy in Type 2 Diabetes RAG designation: Amber Recommended APG subgroup: 18 Aug 2026 APG: 04 Sep 2026	Change to information in current statement regarding specialist referral in event of creatinine and transaminases abnormality. Current statement advises primary care prescriber to contact the patient's endocrinologist; this has been amended to referral to the relevant specialist for advice if either of these do not resolve on discontinuation of the drug.	No cost implication.	MOP: 17 Sept 2026, approved by MOP group.
Actioned items for noting			
Independence Wound Drainage Bags RAG designation: Grey APG subgroup: 18 Aug 2026 APG: 04 Sep 2026	Temporary designation while evaluation by FGSG underway.	TBC on evaluation	MOP: 17 Sept 2026, noted by MOP group.
Striverdi Respimat (olodaterol) RAG designation: Green APG subgroup: 18 Aug 2026	Discontinued, removed from formulary.	No significant cost impact	MOP: 17 Sept 2026, noted by MOP group.

APG: 04 Sep 2026			
Insulin detemir - Levemir brand formulary entry – change to advice regarding product discontinuation RAG designation: Green APG subgroup: 18 Aug 2026 APG: 04 Sep 2026	Amended wording regarding Levemir discontinuation to support clear signposting to local pathways for switching to alternatives and avoid duplicating SPS text. The current wording has been replaced with links to the relevant national guidance.	No cost impact	MOP: 17 Sept 2026, noted by MOP group.

APG reports

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
NICE TA adherence checklist July 2026	For noting.	N/A	N/A