

Area Prescribing Group report

Date: Friday 06 June 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.

New medicines other

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
NICE-approved anti-VEGF drugs and intravitreal corticosteroids used in Ophthalmic Medical Retinal conditions RAG designation: Red APG subgroup: 08 May 2026 APG: 06 Jun 2026	Update to existing statement in line with NHS England guidance for diabetic macular oedema (DMO), central retinal vein occlusion (CRVO) and branch retinal vein occlusion (BRVO). Positioning of treatment options has been aligned with NHS England recommendations that promote adoption of best value biological medicines across the NHS.	Potential for financial savings through adoption of best value products.	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 18 June 2026, approved by MOP group.

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
	Faricimab is no longer recommended as a first-line agent, which requires a system approach to implementation and clinician buy-in. Patient numbers are not expected to be as high as the wet AMD patient cohort. Since the update to the guidance was published, aflibercept 8mg has been licensed for use in RVO. This will be reviewed if NHS England further update the guidance.		

Formulary and guidelines

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
Harmonisation of lithyronine formulary entry RAG designation: Do Not Prescribe (amber retained for hypothyroidism within NHSE criteria, red for resistant depression and radioiodine ablation iodine scanning, or stimulated thyroglobulin test). APG subgroup: 19 May 2026 APG: 05 Jun 2026	Harmonisation of RAG designation post-rapid harmonisation process. Current NHSE guidance states lithyronine should not be routinely prescribed on NHS for hypothyroidism except under strict circumstances after review by NHS endocrinologist, after which prescribing may continue in primary care. NHSE advice outlines criteria where lithyronine may be used in hypothyroidism. Scriptswitch message required to support cost-effective use of oral liquid, capsules and tablets.	Year one costs - cost transfer from hospital prescribing to primary care prescribing: current annual prescribing cost in secondary care is £62,389; the equivalent primary care cost would be £75,848 (+£13,459). Current annual cost in primary care for existing historic patients is £440,737. NHS endocrinologist review of existing historic patients could reduce costs significantly where patients do not fit NHSE criteria.	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 18 June 2026, approved by MOP group.

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
Prescribing choices in the management of vitamin D deficiency. RAG designation: Green APG subgroup: 17 Feb 2026 APG: 05 Jun 2026	Harmonised Cheshire and Merseyside guideline that combines recommendations in adults and paediatrics, taking into account national guidance regarding over-the-counter products/self-care.	No direct impact on cost. However, the document supports existing NHS position on self-care of vitamin D instead of NHS prescription, with prescribing limited to people with osteoporosis or a chronic condition/surgery that has resulted in deficiency or ongoing malabsorption.	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 18 June 2026, approved by MOP group.
Actioned items for noting			
Nebivolol 1.25mg – 2.5mg tablet should be halved to achieve 1.25mg dose. RAG designation: Green APG subgroup: 21 Apr 2026 APG: 05 Jun 2026	Additional formulary wording stating: 1.25mg dose - nebivolol tablet 2.5mg should be halved (tablet scored, licensed for halving) due to high cost of 1.25mg tablets compared to 2.5mg (£172.41 per 28 x 1.25mg compared to £2.20 per 28 x 2.5mg). 1.25mg tablet is non-formulary. Scriptswitch message is required.	Potential cost saving: Current ICB annual cost £358,760; annual items 2,886	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 18 June 2026, noted by MOP group.

Interface prescribing

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
Denosumab 60mg prescribing support information Denosumab GP letter RAG designation: Amber retained APG subgroup: 12 May 2026 APG: 05 June 2026	New harmonised amber retained prescribing support information document and accompanying GP letter. Legacy Merseyside RAG was amber initiated, and legacy Cheshire RAG was purple shared care. However,	No additional financial impact anticipated	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 18 June 2026, approved by MOP group.

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
	this was confirmed as unfunded shared care. Critical RAG review was undertaken by IPSTG who concluded that denosumab meets amber retained RAG requiring ongoing specialist input, particularly around stopping treatment. Red RAG rating agreed for use in CKD 4 and 5 and dialysis patients, which is a change for Cheshire. Specialist to administer first dose only, which is a change from legacy Merseyside arrangement for the first two doses to be given by the specialist.		
Ursodeoxycholic acid RAG designation: Amber retained APG subgroup: 12 May 2026 APG: 05 June 2026	New harmonised amber retained prescribing support information document, which includes licensed indications and locally agreed off-label indications. The legacy RAG rating for ursodeoxycholic acid was green in Cheshire and amber retained in Merseyside. Amber retained RAG for all indications was agreed by IPSTG as a pragmatic solution rather than different RAGs for different indications.	No additional financial impact anticipated	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 18 June 2026, approved by MOP group.

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
Dronedarone RAG harmonisation RAG designation: Red APG subgroup: 12 May 2026 APG: 05 June 2026	Red RAG assigned in formulary to harmonise RAG. Legacy RAG was red in both Merseyside and Cheshire but purple shared care for COCH patients. Shared care confirmed as not funded and COCH confirmed they retain the patients within the service despite purple RAG. No change in practice as a result of RAG harmonisation.	No additional financial impact anticipated	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 18 June 2026, approved by MOP group.
ADHD shared care frameworks for adults: atomoxetine , dexamfetamine , guanfacine , lisdexamfetamine , methylphenidate RAG designation: Purple (shared care) APG subgroup: 12 May 2026 APG: 05 June 2026	New harmonised shared care frameworks for ADHD drugs in adults. A Primary Care LES is being rolled out for Primary Care to support with the delivery of ADHD specialist services due to the long waiting lists and increased spend and limited agreed shared care with the independent sector. Harmonisation of the shared care agreements was required due to unwarranted variation in agreements and implementation across the ICB and to support the updated Primary Care pathways. Updates to definition of specialist and removal of reference to Secondary Care to reflect the new Primary Care LES delivery of ADHD services. Letters within appendices are now formatted as editable pdfs to	No additional financial impact anticipated	ICB Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy (MOP) Group: 18 June 2026, approved by MOP group.

Proposal	Notes	Financial implications	Approval
	facilitate electronic transfer of shared care requests.		

APG reports

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