

### **Background**

Patients living with obesity can be referred to Specialist Weight Management Services (SWMS) – Frimley ICB commissioned service is with Ashford and St Peter's (ASPH) for both Tier 3 medical pathway and bariatric surgery.

The launch of several medical therapies, namely Saxenda, Wegovy, and Tirzepatide has significantly increased the number of referrals and demand for the SWMS. Frimley ICS has introduced a nationally recognised phased implementation approach prioritising access to those with the greatest clinical need (accepted guidance outlined in the joint position statement published by the Society for Endocrinology and Obesity Management Collaborative UK<sup>1</sup>)

Referrals to the ASPH SWMS, and any non-contracted provider of SWMS such as Oviva, should adhere to these locally adopted access protocols in addition to individual service eligibility criteria. Referral forms can be found within DXS under the weight management section.

For individuals who are severely obese, with a BMI above 50kg/m<sup>2</sup>, current evidence of the most appropriate treatment option for weight loss remains bariatric surgery and this should be discussed as first line with patients referred accordingly

### **Pathway Options**

Two separate pathways for SWMS – **medical** and **surgical** routes – are recognised for referral, and these are indicated on the referral form for ASPH.

There will be a significant number of patients who do not meet current criteria to access medical therapy, or who do not wish to have surgery. For those individuals, other sources of care are available with referral options found on DXS under the weight management section.

### **Medical pathway**

Referrals to the medical pathway of any SWMS must meet the access criteria outlined below.

These have been put in place to safeguard against inequality of access, protect system finances to ensure delivery of services using high-cost drugs (of which Wegovy is one) is not to the detriment of other services, and to manage access to enable prioritisation of patients at higher clinical risk.

#### **Access criteria**

Attach supportive documentation with your referral (ie letter from oncology or specialist requesting weight loss for life limiting conditions, letter from sleep clinic confirming AHI score)

Without this information, patients cannot be offered an appointment and process will be delayed.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.endocrinology.org/media/sjdpporx/joint-position-statement-on-medical-therapies-for-obesity\\_final-resubmitted-sfe-211223.pdf](https://www.endocrinology.org/media/sjdpporx/joint-position-statement-on-medical-therapies-for-obesity_final-resubmitted-sfe-211223.pdf)

## **Phase 1 access criteria**

BMI 35 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or above (-2.5 kg/m<sup>2</sup> for ethnic minorities) **AND** one of the following criteria:

1. Active malignancy where rapid weight loss is required for planned therapy, for example radiotherapy or surgery
2. Patients requiring urgent weight loss for organ transplant
3. Idiopathic intracranial hypertension (IIH) requiring frequent lumbar punctures and/or visual compromise. Please note that any individual with IIH or suspected IIH would not be eligible.
4. Patients undergoing planned time-sensitive surgery for life-limiting conditions, where high BMI is the primary barrier to surgery and weight loss would be beneficial
5. Weight loss required for assisted conception in women under the care of a fertility service, in cases where weight loss would be beneficial (patients needs to be on non-oral contraception to start therapy)
6. Severe Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (AHI score > 30 confirmed on a sleep study)
7. Proven genetic cause of obesity and not eligible for Setmelanotide (Imcivree®)

## **Phase 2 access criteria**

Not yet supported

## **Pathway Details – local Frimley ICS SWMS (hosted by ASPH)**

### **Medical pathway (ASPH)**

- Patients has an initial telephone appointment with the physician and are invited to a group session with a dietitian.
- Access to Saxenda is limited and following a National Patients Safety Alert, no new patients are started on this medication.
- Semaglutide (Wegovy) and Tirzepatide (Mounjaro for OBESITY) is being rolled out in a phased approach. Both Wegovy and Tirzepatide can only be prescribed in a Tier 3 setting at this stage. Tirzepatide will be implemented for primary care prescribing at a later stage.
- As per NICE guidance, Wegovy is prescribed for a total of two years, after which it is discontinued, and patients are discharged. Patients who prescribed Wegovy under SWMS will be dispensed from either Wexham or Frimley Dispensary.

### **Surgical (bariatric) pathway (ASPH)**

- Patients begin with a mandatory face to face appointment with the bariatric specialist nurse at Ashford Hospital.
- Patient will be assessed, have bloods taken for pre-op optimisation and can ask any questions.
- Patient attends a mandatory group education session run virtually by the bariatric specialist nurse and dietitian on the types of surgery available, complications, pre and post op diets and long-term changes that are needed to maintain weight loss.
- Final appointment is the One-Stop clinic to meet the surgeon, anaesthetist (high risk patients only), nurse and dietitian for the formal assessment for surgery. The appointment is also carried out virtually. The MDT meeting follows this and then the patient will proceed to further investigations/ appointment (where necessary), or be placed on the waiting list for surgery
- Following the surgical procedure the patient will be followed up by the Bariatric team for a 2-year period before the care is transferred back to the GP for annual review.