

A DECLARATION OF JOINT WORKING BETWEEN NHS Lothian Health Board AND ASTRAZENCA UK LTD

NHS Lothian Health Board and AstraZeneca UK Ltd are engaged in a Joint Working Project entitled “Pharmacist heart failure medication optimisation clinic”.

The project will run from February 2022 to March 2023. Both parties have contributed resources to the initiative.

Background

Heart Failure drug therapies have traditionally been introduced and up-titrated in sequential fashion, a process that involves multiple titration steps with need for blood monitoring and frequent patient contacts. Within NHS Lothian, this process is largely undertaken by an already stretched specialist heart failure nursing team who are also responsible for many other aspects of heart failure care. Due to the number of titration steps required and resource limitation, the time taken to establish patients on optimal drug therapy typically exceeds 6 months¹. There is an urgent need to expedite this process because short term outcomes for heart failure patients remain poor (13% of patients do not survive 30 days following a first emergency admission to hospital for heart failure² and contemporary drug therapies substantially improve prognosis within 30 days of initiation³.

The heart failure service will be redesigned to incorporate a specialist pharmacist to undertake a new intensive model of care. The new service aims to streamline the drug optimisation process through earlier introduction of pharmacological therapy and minimisation of up-titration steps.

1. Packer M, McMurray JJV; European Journal of Heart Failure (2021) 23, 882–894
2. Scottish Heart Disease Statistics by Public Health Scotland (30th March 2021). Available at <https://publichealthscotland.scot/media/4052/2021-03-30-heart-disease-report.pdf>
3. Packer M, McMurray JJV; Circulation. 2021;143:875–877.

Joint Working Aims and Objectives

The project aims to:

- Redesign the heart failure service to incorporate a dedicated heart failure pharmacist clinic.
- Identify and refer appropriate heart failure patients to this clinic.
- Provide appropriate and dedicated pharmaceutical care to these patients aligned to local guidelines/protocols.
- Report project findings and recommendations.

The corresponding objectives include;

- To achieve accelerated and sustained optimization of drug treatment for patients with heart failure
- To improve service activity and capacity
- To demonstrate the safety and acceptability to patients of this working model