

Terms of Reference:

NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Medicines Optimisation Committee

Authority

The group will derive its authority from the South Yorkshire ICB Executive Committee and has the authority to work within the terms of reference below.

Purpose

The NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Medicines Optimisation Committee (SY IMOC) is a multidisciplinary system advisory committee that brings together providers, commissioners and other partners to develop South Yorkshire-wide recommendations regarding medicines optimisation.

The Committee develops evidence-based recommendations on prescribing, prescribed product pathways, access categories (formerly “traffic light status”), preferencing recommendations (formerly “formulary positioning”), medicines optimisation and related policies to support the safe, clinically effective, equitable and sustainable use of prescribed products across South Yorkshire, with the aim of improving patient outcomes, reducing unwarranted variation and making best use of NHS resources. This will take into account relevant national policy, guidance and formulary recommendations.

The Committee provides a forum for collaboration across partner organisations, supporting consistent implementation of agreed South Yorkshire and national medicines optimisation recommendations, sharing expertise and reducing unnecessary duplication of work.

Where recommendations have commissioning, contractual, financial or governance implications requiring formal organisational approval, these will be referred through the appropriate governance processes of the South Yorkshire ICB and/or partner organisations.

Membership and Attendance

Responsibilities of Members

- Represent the organisation or professional group they have been nominated to represent, consulting within their organisation as appropriate to inform the Committee's discussions and recommendations.
- Attend meetings regularly, utilising deputies where necessary. Deputies should be appropriately briefed and empowered to represent their organisation effectively.
- Read papers in advance of meetings and contribute constructively to discussions.
- Undertake work on behalf of the Committee between meetings where appropriate.
- Ensure that approved decisions are communicated effectively within the organisation or professional group they represent.
- Support and promote implementation of approved decisions within their organisation, in accordance with local governance arrangements.
- Escalate any significant barriers to implementation, operational issues or unintended consequences to the Committee.
- Comply with applicable standards of business conduct and conflicts of interest requirements, declaring any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest relating to matters under consideration by the Committee.
- Organisations and professional groups are expected to attend at least 60% of IMOC meetings.

Membership

Core members:

- Chair
- Deputy Chair

(at least one of the Chair and Deputy Chair should be an active prescribing clinician)

- Professional Secretary (who may also act as one of the representatives listed below)
- ICB Pharmacist (Strategic level or higher)
- Senior ICB Pharmacy Technician
- Pharmacy expertise as required to facilitate discussion regarding:
 - Medicines safety
 - New and emerging prescribed products
- Expert clinical representatives from relevant providers, including:
 - General Practice
 - Community Pharmacy
 - Acute Secondary Care
 - Mental Health Care
- Relevant other commissioning expertise (e.g. neighbouring ICBs, specialised commissioning)
- Patient voice representative

Additional expertise (e.g. dentistry, optometry) may be co-opted by the group for relevant agenda items.

If a core member is unable to attend a meeting, they will be responsible for identifying a suitable deputy to attend on their behalf. Such a deputy must have sufficient seniority and sufficient understanding of the issues to be considered to represent their organisation or profession effectively, and be empowered to communicate outputs from the Committee to their organisation or relevant peers.

Meetings, Quorum and Recommendations

Quorum

The Committee shall be considered quorate when the following are present:

- Chair or Deputy Chair
- Two primary care (including community pharmacy) representatives
- Two secondary care representatives
- One senior SY ICB pharmacy representative
- At least one medical prescriber and one pharmacist

The Committee will normally meet monthly, but meetings may be stood down at the Chair's discretion.

Development of recommendations

The Committee will seek to develop recommendations by unanimous agreement wherever possible. Abstentions will not prevent the Committee from reaching unanimous agreement

Where unanimous agreement cannot be reached, the Chair will facilitate further discussion taking account of factors including:

- Clinical effectiveness
- Patient safety
- Cost-effectiveness and resource implications
- Operational feasibility, including organisational capacity and clinical competency to deliver the proposed pathway or intervention
- Commissioning and contractual implications
- Equity of access and reduction of health inequalities and unwarranted variation (both within and outside SY, including when compared to neighbouring ICBs)
- Relevant national guidance and the strength of the supporting evidence

Where necessary, the Committee will identify and record appropriate mitigations that would facilitate a unanimous recommendation, and include the recommended mitigations in its report to the ICB Executive Committee.

Where the Committee is still unable to reach a unanimous agreement, it will provide the ICB Executive Committee with a summary of the Committee's deliberations, including the principal positions expressed, the rationale supporting those positions and, where appropriate, the degree of support for each position, to inform the final decision.

Members and other affected parties may request reconsideration of a recommendation where new evidence has emerged or where material clinical, operational, financial or implementation considerations have not previously been considered.

Responsibilities of the Committee

In carrying out its work, the Committee will examine the value of any proposition, which includes:

- Patient safety
- Clinical effectiveness
- Strength and quality of the supporting evidence
- Place in therapy relative to available treatment options
- Relevant national and regional guidance
- Equity of access and reduction of health inequalities and unwarranted variation
- Cost-effectiveness and wider resource implications
- Operational feasibility, including organisational capacity and clinical competency to deliver proposed pathways
- Commissioning, contractual and governance implications
- Patient, public and professional stakeholder views, where appropriate
- Environmental sustainability

The Committee will:

- Develop system-wide recommendations regarding prescribed products, prescribing pathways and medicines optimisation.
- Develop recommendations on access categories and preferencing recommendations using nationally agreed terminology.
- Develop recommendations on shared care guidance and prescribing pathways for South Yorkshire-wide implementation
- Support implementation of relevant national guidance, including NICE guidance, nationally commissioned policies and statutory commissioning requirements.
- Respond to requests from SY ICB, national bodies and partner organisations.
- Discuss prescribing issues identified at interfaces between primary, community, mental health, specialist and acute care.

- Consider medicines optimisation issues relating to social care and local authority services where these impact on prescribed products used across the health and care system.
- Ensure stakeholder engagement is proportionate to the significance of the matter under consideration.
- Promote collaboration across partner organisations to support consistent implementation of approved decisions and reduce unnecessary duplication of work.
- Escalate issues requiring regional or national consideration through the appropriate routes.
- Develop relationships with new and emerging organisations and networks that influence medicines optimisation across South Yorkshire.

Managing conflicts of interest

The Chair will determine the appropriate management of any declared conflict of interest, including whether the member may participate in discussion of the relevant item.

Where the Chair determines that a member should not participate in discussion of a particular item, the organisation represented by that member may nominate an appropriate deputy to participate on its behalf.

The Committee will maintain a register of members' interests. Members are required to complete a declaration of interests on appointment and at least annually thereafter and must notify the Chair and Secretariat promptly of any material change to their declared interests.

Behaviours and Conduct

Members are expected to:

- Act in the interests of the South Yorkshire health and care system while recognising the perspectives of the organisations they represent.
- Contribute openly, constructively and respectfully to discussions, recognising the value of multidisciplinary perspectives.
- Base contributions on the best available evidence and professional expertise.
- Support transparent, objective and proportionate decision-making.
- Respect differing professional opinions and work collaboratively to achieve consensus wherever possible.
- Declare and appropriately manage any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Raise legitimate concerns through the Committee's governance arrangements where appropriate.

- Have due regard to equality, diversity and inclusion, reducing health inequalities and promoting equitable access to prescribed products.

Accountability and Reporting

The Committee is accountable to the ICB Executive Committee and will provide assurance through regular reporting of its activities, recommendations and work programme.

The Committee will provide an annual report summarising its activity, key recommendations, implementation priorities and any matters requiring further strategic consideration.

Approved Committee outputs, recommendations and supporting information will be communicated to relevant organisations through agreed South Yorkshire medicines optimisation governance and communication arrangements to support consistent implementation across the system.

Secretariat and Administration

The Chair is responsible for:

- Providing leadership to the Committee and ensuring that meetings are conducted effectively and in accordance with these Terms of Reference.
- Determining the management of any declared conflicts of interest.
- Approving the agenda and determining whether urgent items should be considered.
- Determining whether meetings should be cancelled where there is insufficient business or where anticipated attendance is unlikely to achieve quoracy.

The Professional Secretary is responsible for:

- Supporting the Chair in the administration and governance of the Committee.
- Preparing the agenda in conjunction with the Chair.
- Organising meetings and circulating invitations, the agenda and supporting papers.
- Drafting and maintaining the minutes, action log and other Committee records.
- Maintaining the Committee's register of interests and supporting the Committee's governance arrangements.
- Publishing approved Committee outputs through agreed communication channels.

Review

The terms of reference will be reviewed annually.

Date of initial approval: Approved by the executive group October 2026

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