

Cancer Drugs Fund (CDF)

As of April 2016 a new-look Cancer Drugs Fund (CDF) replaced the previous fund, which closed on 31 March 2016.

The previous CDF, which had benefitted over 95,000 patients since its inception in April 2011, had come under unsustainable financial pressure with calls for urgent reform coming from the independent Cancer Taskforce, the National Audit Office and from Parliament's Public Accounts Committee.

The new system is the product of partnership working between NHS England, NICE, Public Health England and the Department of Health, and was the subject of a 12-week public consultation. The final operational detail has been informed by further engagement with key stakeholders, including patient groups and industry.

Key features of the new system include:

- All cancer drugs/indications expecting to receive a marketing authorisation (license) will now be appraised by NICE;
- Early funding option available, through new interim funding arrangements, for those drugs given either a NICE draft recommendation for routine commissioning use, or a NICE draft recommendation for use within the CDF;
- Clear entry and exit points for drugs in the CDF;
- Managed Access Agreements between NHS England and pharmaceutical companies, setting out the terms of a drug's entry into the CDF and the means by which data will be collected to resolve any uncertainty relating to a drug's clinical and cost-effectiveness;
- All eligible patients to receive CDF drugs, not just the number of patients needed to resolve uncertainty;
- Expenditure control mechanism to reduce risk of overspend and ensure the fund never needs to close to new entrants;
- A new, joint NHS England/NICE CDF Investment Group to manage the overall CDF budget;
- Similar opportunities for off-label drugs to gain access to CDF funds, if deemed to show clinical promise.

As of May 2017, the CDF budget was fixed at £340m and details of drugs available can be found at the following site: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/cancer/cdf/>