

University Hospital Sussex NHS Trust, Royal Sussex County Hospital, Eastern Rd, Brighton and Hove, Brighton BN2 5BE

Project Name: University Hospital Sussex Rheumatology Physician's Associate

Project Summary:

The aim of this Collaborative Working Project ("**CWP**") is to ease the current backlog for Rheumatology patients waiting to be seen and ensure patients are accessing specialist treatment and management at the right time at the University Hospital Sussex NHS Trust (the "**CW Partner**").

The CW Partner will recruit a full time equivalent (FTE) Rheumatology Physicians Associate to support the Trust Rheumatology rheumatoid arthritis (RA)/psoriatic arthritis (PsA)/axial spondyloarthritis (AxSpa) service with management, review, and follow up of RA/PsA/AxSpa patients. Additionally, the Trust will establish a Business Case for future funding of this extension to this service by the NHS.

This resource will help address the staff shortages and backlog of patients currently being experienced by the Trust at the Royal Sussex Country Hospital (RSCH).

Integrating the Physicians Associate into all aspects of the service, the CWP aims to:

- Set up 4-5 additional clinics per week (general follow up, biologic clinics, pre-biologic clinics and Connective Tissue Disease clinics);
- improve patient outcomes and experience by reducing time between referral, diagnosis, and treatment, and increasing awareness of the Rheumatology pathway

Milestone	Description
1	CW Partner/Novartis kick off meeting CW Partner to collect project baseline data
2	CW Partner to confirm recruitment of one FTE Band 7 Physicians Associate CW Partner to confirm clinical and operational pathway in place, policy and protocol creation, and readiness to begin the clinical activity
3	Carry out 3 months of clinical operations according to the developed protocols, CW Partner to monitor and collect data, provide anonymised report containing such data to Novartis.
4	Carry out 6 months of clinical operations according to the developed protocols, CW Partner to monitor and collect data, provide anonymised report containing such data to Novartis.
5	Carry out 9 months of clinical operations according to the developed protocols, CW Partner to

monitor and collect data, provide anonymised report containing such data to Novartis.

Milestone	Description
6	Carry out 12 months of clinical operations as per the developed protocols, CW Partner to monitor and collect data, provide anonymised report containing such data to Novartis.
7	CW Partner to develop and submit business case to support future funding to relevant body within the NHS board.
8	CW Partner to submit final report to Novartis and Novartis/CW Partner collaborate to publish Outcomes Summary in line with the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) guidelines.

Expected Benefits:

Anticipated Benefits to Patients:

- Improved access to diagnosis and treatment of RA/PsA/AxSpa;
- More equitable and consistent access to care;
- Enhanced experience for patients and their carers who live with RA/PsA/AxSpa

Anticipated Benefits to the Organisation:

- Increase the overall quality of care for RA/PsA/AxSpa patients in Sussex;
- Improve equity of access to specialist care for patients with RA/PsA/AxSpa;
- Decrease patient waiting times;
- Staffing diversification with the onboarding of a new role in the Rheumatology Department

Anticipated Benefit to Novartis:

- Increased appropriate use of licensed medicines in line with NICE guidelines, including Novartis' therapies;
- Improved reputation;
- Improved professional and transparent relationship and trust between Novartis and the NHS

Start Date & Duration: January-2024 for 20 months

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