**Isotretinoin Pathway – South West Hampshire Patients Only**

**General Information**

The British Association of Dermatologists (BAD) guidelines were published in 2010 which consider the safe introduction and continued use of isotretinoin. This pathway is based on those recommendations, being the most up to date guidelines with reference to use of the drug in the UK. In the UK it is considered that isotretinoin should only be prescribed by a consultant dermatologist or a consultant-led team under the supervision of a dermatologist.

Commissioners have been working with UHS and About Health Ltd to introduce a community based isotretinoin initiation phase one pathway which will commence on 10th September 2021 **for male patients over 16 years**.

The phase two pathway will be further developed for females in due course.

**Phase One Inclusion Criteria**

* Male
* Patient is 16 years old or over
* No past medical history of depression or mood change
* Acne with scarring, regardless of severity of inflammatory acne
* Nodulo-cystic acne
* Moderate to severe non-scarring acne not responding to 2 adequate courses of systemic antibiotics.
* Patient has acne resistant to antibiotics (more than 3 months of 2 different antibiotics
* in combination with topical therapy keratolytic E.g. Benzoyl Peroxide /retinoid E.g. Adapalene)

**Exclusion Criteria (refer to secondary care)**

* Female patients
* Patients with evidence of dysmorphophobia
* Patients who have previously had a course of isotretinoin

**The Isotretinoin Pathway**

Within the pathway all patients will have:

* a record of treatment to date and be advised of the requirement undergoing this treatment
* been considered within the scope of the inclusion criteria for Isotretinoin
* bloods taken at the first appointment with the specialist (unless bloods have been recently taken and results included in referral)
	+ Full blood count (FBC); U&E’s, LFT, fasting lipids[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Monitoring investigations will be completed by About Health clinicians:
	+ FBC, U&Es, LFT, fasting lipids will be redone at 4 weeks and at 8 weeks if the dose has been increased at week 4.

**The patient and GP will have access to clinical advice on the same day through About Health A&G option on ERS**

**Process**

Patient attends GP Appointment to discuss acne

Patient does not meet inclusion criteria

Patient meets inclusion criteria

GP completes referral form

Alternative pathway/treatment found which may result in a referral to secondary care

Invited to Isotretinoin Clinic

Consultation and Investigations completed

Receives medication with six weekly follow ups

**How to make a referral**

* The GP should review the inclusion criteria
* Complete referral form or by letter from the GP containing all the required information on the acne referral proforma (will be available on Ardens/GP Portal)
* Submit referral via e-RS

**What the Patient can expect**

Treatment will be for a 16 week period.

The patient will have full medical history taken and a number of baseline investigations to ensure that they are suitable for the treatment. Throughout the treatment the patient will be monitored for unexpected side effects

The patient will receive extensive counselling on the risks and benefits of the drug and verbally consent to treatment. The patient will also be given written information regarding the drug, its side effects, risks and benefits. It should also contain information on whom and how they contact a clinician in the event of side effects occurring. Information provided will be BAD patient information leaflet.

Feedback will be sought from the patient for service improvement and modification of the pathway.

**Follow-up**

Patients should be reviewed 6 weeks after finishing a course of isotretinoin.

Response to treatment should be recorded and advice given regarding treatment of relapse ( 60% of patients will require some follow-up treatment for recurrent acne, usually significantly less severe than prior to treatment. 20% of patients will require a second course of isotretinoin at some point however).

**Points to note:**

1. Isotretinoin Protocol
2. Phase 2 (Female Patients) will be reviewed with the provisional start of Spring 2022.

**If you have any questions regarding the service, please contact:**

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1. **NB. Please note that About Health have access to ICE to check blood results** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)