**Gold Briefing – COVID-19 Treatments for patients in prison**

**Purpose**

To highlight the requirements for prisons in line with the community publication of an NHS Clinical Commissioning policy. The policy introduces new COVID-19 treatments in England, which will also be available to eligible patients in prison. Separate arrangements will apply in Wales, establishments are therefore advised to await further advice from HMPPS in Wales. Please see below a letter from Kate Davies CBE issued on 10th December, explaining access to the treatment program in England for prisoners.



The ‘first line’ nMAB treatment must be delivered in hospital and given promptly to be effective. It will be available to anyone 12+. Anti-viral treatments for Covid-19 are also newly available as a ‘second line’ treatment for those who are not suitable for first line treatment, available to anyone 18+. These are taken orally and can be delivered in a prison.

Clinically eligible patients in prisons are not expected to exceed 2000. Moreover, in order to receive treatment, patients must be both COVID-19 positive *and* symptomatic. We are therefore hopeful that the impact on prisons’ hospital escorts and pharmacy should be relatively low but are likely to be higher at some establishments than others. It is clear, however, that the safe escorting of any of your most vulnerable prisoners, whilst COVID-19 positive and to be considered infectious, will require planning and resources.

There are tasks Governors can complete to prepare for and facilitate this process:

* **Engage now with in-prison healthcare provider to identify possible eligible patients in your establishment** and complete risk assessments around their escorting needs.
* **Engage with in-prison healthcare provider to identify relevant treatment sites** and risk assess for people coming from a custodial setting, if required. These sites may be hospitals known to the prison, or they may be new sites.
* **Facilitate telephone appointments** between identified possible patients and external healthcare services, for clinical assessment by the community provider.
* **Work with transport providers to organise safe and possibly urgent medical transfers** of COVID-19 positive eligible patients. Please note the PECs are no longer contracted to offer services. The following transportation services available for prison leavers are embedded below and should be considered here. Local risk assessments should be considered for each of these.



* Communicate to Gate/Stores and Healthcare staff that **oral medications will also be delivered by couriers for a number of patients and must be accepted and transferred to healthcare and pharmacy.**
* Complete local contingency planning to **enable access to treatments off-site** if staff resourcing is constrained.
* **Consider the risk of additional movement of prisoners**, particularly in and out of possible COVID-19 outbreak sites.

**Eligibility & Reporting**

Clinical Commissioning guidance will be issued to define who is clinically eligibly for treatment. This will be communicated to the healthcare provider in each prison on a weekly basis. New prisoners will be identified in reception. A summary flow chart has been embedded below:



* A user guide has been drafted for providers and guidance and projected requirement is being written for the detained estate. Further guidance will be issued as received.