

CASE STUDY

Joint Working Project between University Hospital Birmingham and Sanofi to improve patient experience and service capacity in the Severe Asthma Service

1.0 Project Aim and objectives

The aim of the joint working project between University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHB) and Sanofi was to improve patient experience and service capacity in the UHB Severe Asthma Service.

2.0 Project Objectives

The objectives of the project were to:

1. Enhance and maintain biologics database to improve service co-ordination.
2. Ensure consistency in database management within the department that ensures ongoing administration related to the prescribing and monitoring of patients on biologics and transition to homecare.
3. Provide a central point of contact for patient queries which should improve patient wait times as well as patient experience of the service.
4. Reduce the administrative burden on clinical staff thereby freeing up clinical capacity that could be put towards seeing additional patients.
5. Support co-ordination of the MDT which would lead to an improvement in the functioning of the MDT.
6. Utilise findings and outcomes from the project to build a business case to continue the post through NHS funding at the end of the 12 months.

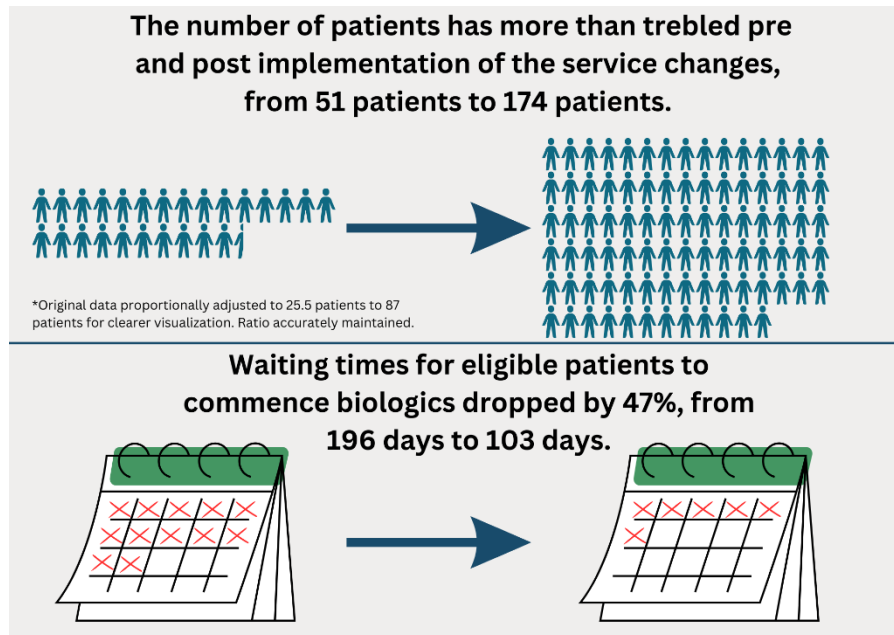
3.0 Key Achievements and Highlights of the Project:

The project commenced in March 2023 and completed in December 2024. The project delivered on all the following outputs in relation to the project objectives:

1. **Further development of the Biologics Database.** This was done by the Biologics Administrator and has reduced administration burden for nurses and improved service co-ordination. The maintenance of the database ensured consistency in database management related to the prescribing and monitoring of patients on biologics and transition to homecare such as booking trial slots, changing of appointments, answering patient queries, and liaising with homecare providers, initiation spokes and the extended clinical team. The reduction of administrative burden on Clinical Nurse Specialists has freed up their capacity enabling them to increase weekly Biologic Clinics, increase number of patients seen, reduce the patient backlog and waiting time for initiation of biologic treatment. In addition, the nurses have taken on follow-up reviews of patients on biologic treatment which has freed up Doctor capacity, to see inpatients and concentrate on admission avoidance by triaging acutely unwell patients in RADA, and to complete care bundles for asthma patients admitted as inpatients.
2. **Establishment Central Patient Helpline.** The Patient Helpline was established by the Biologics Administrator taking control of the existing Triage Mobile Phone providing biologic patients with a central point of contact for their queries and concerns and enabling them to be dealt with promptly thereby reducing patient wait times and improving patient experience of the service.
3. **Streamlining of the Multi-Disciplinary Team in UHB.** The Biologics Administrator has streamlined processes within the multidisciplinary team in UHB and liaison with Tier 3 sites has improved the functioning of the Regional MDT.
4. **Increase of Patients on Biologics and Reduction of Waiting Times.** Data for the 12 months pre & post service change implementation shows that there has been a **241%** increase in patient initiations on biologics. The number of patients has more than trebled pre and post implementation of the service changes, from **51 to 174** patients. The waiting time for patients currently on the waiting list for initiation has decreased by **47%** from **196 days to 103**. The improvement of the bio-penetration of biologics in severe asthma within UHB to above the national average has grown the national reputation of the service.
5. **Benefits for Staff.** The introduction of the Biologics Administrator to the team has centralized biologics prescribing administration, reducing clinical staff workload. This increased patient-facing time and clinic

capacity. Nurses could now conduct follow-up reviews, see inpatients, triage acute cases, and complete asthma care bundles, freeing up doctors' time and supporting admission avoidance.

6. **Sustaining Service Improvements.** The Trust has approved a business case for on-going funding of the Biologics Administrator post ensuring that the service improvements can be sustained.



Feedback from University Hospitals Birmingham:

Julie Sullivan, Clinical Nurse Specialist/Nurse Manager and Lisa White, Clinical Nurse Specialist:

"We have been able to clearly demonstrate the benefits and outcomes for patients and the service. The project has enabled us to increase patients receiving biologic treatment and reduce the waiting times for patients to be initiated on biologic treatment and supported us to provide care closer to home for patients in a timely fashion in line with NHS guidelines."

Feedback from patients received via Trust survey:

"I have nothing but praise for the service and all the team. The new treatment has definitely improved my quality of life and steroid usage. Thank you so much xx"

"The team have been very helpful and supportive with the treatment."

"Excellent service. Fantastic staff!"

This project was successful in winning both the Patient Impact Award and Customer Impact Award in the Pf Awards 2025. The project was also a finalist in the HSJ Partnership Awards 2025 in the Best Pharmaceutical Partnership with the NHS category.



