

Final Project Report

A Collaborative Working Agreement between Sanofi and the Dermatology Department within Peterborough City Hospital to review and improve the patient journey and experience for patients receiving biologic treatment.

1.0 Project Aim & Objectives

The overall **aim** of Peterborough City Hospital was to improve the patient journey and experience for patients receiving biologic treatment.

The **objectives** of the project were:

- Map and review the biologics pathway and identify gaps and issues to be addressed to improve the pathway.
- Review administrative processes within the pathway and identify and implement improvements to improve the management of patients on biologic treatment.
- Map and review internal homecare set up and processes and timeframe for initiation of prescribing and process for prescription requests and follow-up with homecare for prescription delivery and identify changes to deliver improvements.
- Undertake a population health analysis of adults treated with biologics for atopic dermatitis to identify areas of variation and health inequality in access to biologic treatment.
- Undertake a review of capacity and demand within the biologics service and review how workforce is utilised to support delivery of the biologics service.
- Evaluate the implementation of a Biologics Administrator post and support the production of a business case for Peterborough City Hospital to continue funding of the post.

2.0 Project Outcomes

A summary of the key outcomes from the project are provided below.

2.1 Pathway Mapping

The pathway was mapped from referral to biologic treatment to identify pressure points and areas where improvements could be made. The following opportunities to improve the pathway were identified:

- No formal pathway from general dermatology to biologic clinic
- Lack of database to support the recording and monitoring of patients on biologics
- Lack of nursing capacity and dedicated clinics
- Reallocation of workload
 - Homecare paperwork processing
 - Follow-up of homecare patients
 - Inefficiencies in the completion of the proforma

2.2 Implementation of Biologics Administrator Role

The Biologics Administrator role has been fully implemented providing the following improvements to the service:

- Reduced the administration burden on clinical staff associated with biologics
- Improved tracking of biologics usage
- Reduced patient waiting times
- Enhanced monitoring of prescription delivery
- More efficient workflow distribution.

The Biologics Administrator role has been sustained by the Trust following completion of Sanofi funding for the first year. The data collected throughout the project has helped to demonstrate the positive outcomes of the Biologics Administrator role.

2.3 Waiting time to biologic initiation

Audits (retrospective and prospective) were conducted to evaluate and analyse the time patients spend progressing through the different stages of the biologic pathway. We mapped the complete patient journey, measuring key timepoints and transitions between different stages of care. This audit process involved tracking individual patient progression through various service touchpoints, from decision to start treatment to treatment commencement, allowing the identification of bottlenecks, inefficiencies and opportunities for service improvement.

The average total waiting time from decision to prescribe a biologic to treatment commencement has reduced by 38% reduction between June 2024 and April 2025 (from 81 to 50 days).

The audit in April 2025 identified that there is a limitation on Nurse appointments which is impacting on waiting time to initiation as there is currently a requirement for a patient to have a face to face appointment prior to being initiated on treatment. Since April the service has implemented several changes including revised appointment times, introduction of virtual appointments for biologic initiation and increased biologic nurse hours and appointments. These changes will continue to reduce waiting times for biologic initiation.

2.4 Patient Survey

Some of the key findings of the patient survey were:

- Two-thirds of patients started their treatment within the past six months.
- Patients gave high satisfaction scores to the following areas:
 - Information provided by the Dermatology Team (4.7)
 - The ease of contacting the Dermatology team (4.6)
 - The time taken from outpatient appointment to medication commencement (4.4)
 - The time taken to resolve prescription issues (4.4)
- Nearly half of patients (46.2%) contact nurses for and queries they had about their condition, while only 23.1% contact doctors directly.
- For medication inquiries, two-fifths of patients contact the nurses, with the remainder contacting various staff including doctors, pharmacists, secretaries, and homecare.
- Half of the patients contact nurses regarding prescription inquiries,
- More than half of patients contact secretaries for outpatient appointment questions.
- Patients highlighted several strengths of the service including punctual appointments, advance scheduling notice, and professional staff attitudes, with specific praise for Dr. Banfield's attentiveness.
- The homecare service received positive feedback for friendly delivery drivers and prescription tracking, though some challenges with prescription management were noted.
- Areas that patients identified as requiring improvement included appointment booking processes, with some patients experiencing frequent changes and uncertainty about future appointments.

The patient survey identified the following areas for improvement - standardising appointment scheduling, improving medication dispensary efficiency, and optimising blood testing procedures.

2.5 Staff Survey

Some of the key findings of the staff survey were:

- Two-thirds of patients started their treatment within the past six months. The NWAFT dermatology service received an overall rating from staff of 4.1 out of 5 for how well the service operated for patients and staff.
- Pharmacy staff gave the highest ratings (5/5) while administrative staff rated their own working conditions lower (3.5/5).
- The introduction of a dedicated biologics administrator has significantly improved prescription management and patient tracking.

- Staff administrative time decreased from between 15+ hours to 5+ hours per week after the administrator appointment.
- Despite improvements, the service still faces challenges with clinical appointment capacity and staff overload. Room availability constraints continue to limit clinic accessibility for patients.
- Staff highlighted that the Biologics Administrator role has "transformed the biologics pathway enormously," creating a smoother, more efficient service that benefits both patients and staff.
- Key priorities include enhancing nurse efficiency, maintaining strong administrative coordination, and ensuring regular patient reviews.
- Staff consistently highlighted that the Biologics Administrator role has transformed the biologics pathway, benefiting both patients and staff through streamlined workflows and enhanced collaboration.
- The service demonstrates strengths in treatment implementation and biologics pathway management, though response times to queries remain inconsistent.

Overall, the staff survey indicated positive progress with the administrative improvements while acknowledging ongoing capacity challenges that affect service delivery.

3.0 Project Timescales

The project commenced in Q1 2024 and was completed in Q2 2025 in line with the original timeframes.

4.0 Project Funding

The resources utilised in the project were as planned at the outset. The total cost of the project was: **£55,365**. This was split into NHS and Sanofi contribution as follows:

- NHS contribution = £32,219 which was made up of £28,964 direct costs to fund a band 3 pharmacist biologics administrator and £3,255 indirect costs
- Sanofi contribution = £23,146 which was made up of £6,845 direct costs to fund a band 3 biologics administrator and £16,301 of indirect costs.

5.0 Service Impact of the Project

The project has enabled the service to:

- Develop a robust biologics database to support on-going management of patients on biologics and measurement of waiting times from referral to initiation
- Free up clinicians from administrative tasks enabling them to use this for patient clinical care
- Increase the number of patients receiving biologic treatment within the project timeframe.
- Reduce waiting times for patients for biologic initiation.

The staff survey highlighted that the Biologics administrator role has "transformed the biologics pathway enormously," creating a smoother, more efficient service that benefits both patients and staff.

6.0 Benefits from the Project

The project has delivered the following benefits for patients, the NHS and Sanofi:

Patients:

- ✓ Improve patient experience of the biologics service through improved service co-ordination.
- ✓ Reduction in time for patients to receive their biologic prescription and commence on treatment.
- ✓ Streamlined and improved processes to enable patients to receive repeat prescriptions in a timely manner and avoiding breaks in treatment.
- ✓ Improved process for patients to raise patient queries around biologics through having a central patient helpline.

NHS:

- ✓ Identification of the gaps and issues within the biologics service and identification of proposed changes to improve the service.
- ✓ Review of capacity and demand for the biologics service to inform the development of the biologics service to support the follow-up and on-going management of patients.
- ✓ Supporting the optimum management of patients on immunosuppressants and biologics by organising and co-ordinating the Systemics and Biologics Service.
- ✓ Review and improvement of processes for management of homecare for patients on biologics and the issue of repeat prescriptions.
- ✓ Establishment and management of a biologics and immunosuppressant prescription database to ensure a high quality and accurate database in dermatology.
- ✓ Identification of variation in the prescribing of biologics for adults by undertaking a population health analysis of Hospital Trusts who refer into Peterborough City Hospital.

Sanofi:

- ✓ Greater clarity of the pressure points and priorities for the dermatology service enabling us to tailor our offerings in the future.
- ✓ Greater clarity of the gaps and problems around homecare organisation and co-ordination affecting the issue of repeat prescriptions for patients on biologics which is a common problem across Hospital Trusts thereby enabling us to explore how best to support other Hospital Trusts to address these issues.
- ✓ Improved corporate reputation within Peterborough City Hospital by supporting them to improve the quality of care for patients.
- ✓ Increase in the prescribing of Sanofi products for Atopic Dermatitis in line with local and national guidance.

7.0 Customer Feedback**Feedback from staff in the Dermatology Service:**

Pauline Waterfall, Administration & Pathway Co-ordinator for Dermatology & Plastic Surgery, Surgery Management, Surgery Directorate

“It has been lovely working with you all on this project, easy to work with and informative. With your help, support and suggestions, we have streamlined and tightened up our processes with a specifically designed database. This has cut down on waiting times for patients and ensures patients are not lost and receive their medications on time.”