



## **INDIVIDUAL FUNDING REQUEST (IFR) PATIENT INFORMATION FACT SHEET**

### **NHS South Essex**

NHS South Essex (SE) is responsible for looking after the health needs of the local population within the funds allocated.

NHS SE has close working relationships with independent contractors such as GPs, dentists, opticians and pharmacies, as well as with hospital consultants and other healthcare professionals,

### **What is the Individual Funding Request (IFR) Panel?**

If you have received this information leaflet your doctor is probably asking NHS SE to consider funding a treatment that is outside the normal range of treatments funded by the NHS.

Alternatively the Specialist Commissioning Team may have refused your case because it falls outside of agreed criteria, which give guidance on access to restricted treatments in the NHS. These treatments are often considered to be of low priority and include, for example, cosmetic surgery.

The IFR Panel would not normally agree to look at a case without the support of a patient's GP or hospital doctor.

### **Who sits on the panel?**

The Panel normally consists of a Non-Executive Director or lay representative, doctor, nurse and CCG Commissioning manager.

Any colleagues new to the IFR Panel Process may be present for training purposes. This ensures that patients experience minimal delays when awaiting their case to be considered.

In addition, an administrator will always be present to take the minutes of the Panel meeting.

Each case is treated in the strictest confidence.

## **What are the Panel looking for?**

The IFR Panel looks at cases where there may be exceptional circumstances, and to ensure that decisions are made about treatments that:

- Are based on the best available evidence (for example, medical research)
- Look to improve the patient's condition and not make it worse
- Take account of the views of the patient and their doctor, inviting patients to give evidence in person to the Panel if they wish
- Make best use of the resources available for healthcare within the NHS SE area

## **How does the panel work?**

The panel meetings are normally held at the NHS SE Head Office in Phoenix Court, Basildon. You will have a choice whether to attend the panel in person, state your case in a letter or speak to one of the Panel members on the telephone.

Your invitation to attend the Panel is your opportunity to discuss your case and explain your view as to why your circumstances are exceptional, to supplement the information submitted by your doctor.

The Panel members may ask a few questions to help them understand your circumstances better.

It might feel formal attending the Panel meeting; you are welcome to bring someone with you if you feel this would help.

When you have finished explaining why you want a particular treatment you will be able to leave. A decision is not made while you are there. You will be informed of the Panel's decision within 14 days working days of the meeting.

## **What happens if I disagree with the Panel's decision?**

You can appeal against the way the Panel made their decision. This will need to be put in writing to the PCT within 28 days of receiving a letter notifying you of the Panel's decision. A panel from a neighbouring PCT will review appeals.

### **Contact details:**

NHS South Essex  
Phoenix Court  
Christopher Martin Road  
Basildon  
Essex, SS14 3HG

### **Telephone number for Individual Funding enquiries:**

Tel: 01268 705233  
Fax: 01268 243450 (safe haven)