

---

## Is our NHS failing to use useful drugs

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/08/17 21:16

---

N.I.C.E the organisation in the UK, which makes the decisions on which drugs are used in the rest of the UK, is criticised for not allowing many drugs for use. Scotland has its own organisation to make these decisions. The Scottish Medicines Consortium NICE also takes longer than SMC.

I find it strange that although NICE often takes longer than SMG both often agree.

The condemnation of NICE and SMG at the moment is because there are available drugs for cancer which would give many more months of life or could cure or at a minimum give a less distressing death

NICE and SMG state they must take usefulness and cost into the equation.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/health/article4538256.ece>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7179699.stm>

Unfortunately, both these organisation work to a budget and state they must try to ensure each illness or condition has some fairness in treatment.

Often though drugs can be stopped at a local level.

<http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?artid=1123597>

The cost of the condition on the NHS does seem to have an effect on which drugs are allowed.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1554268/Eye-drug-only-on-NHS-in-Scotland.html>

The public complain that relatively cheap drugs, which can make a dramatic difference to life, are refused. While some expensive drugs with seemingly little use are allowed.

There is no doubt that drug companies make relatively inexpensive drugs and charge the NHS north and south of the border huge sums stating that they must recoup the cost of research within the cost of the drugs.

Many within the public and some political parties have suggested we should allow top ups within the NHS to allow patients who could afford to pay these expensive drugs to pay for them and still receive treatment on the NHS. Now if they decide to use a drug not allowed within the NHS they must also pay for all other treatment including consultant appointments, blood tests, scans, surgery and x-rays.

Others state that this is privatisation by the back door and could result in a better service for people who can pay in effect a two-tier system.

It seems NICE and SMG are standing out against the extortionate prices charged by the drug companies,

What is the solution to this problem?

=====