

# Asthma Biologics Homecare Medicines Service

## Information for Academic Health Science Network Leads

### What is a homecare medicines service?

Homecare medicines services deliver ongoing medicine supplies and, where necessary, associated nursing care, initiated by the hospital prescriber, direct to the patient's home with their consent. Prescriptions are generated by clinical teams and the clinical check and processing of the prescription, including invoice management is undertaken by hospital pharmacy departments.

The purpose of the homecare medicines service is to improve patient care and choice of their clinical treatment. The benefits of using homecare for asthma biologic treatment are:

- It improves access to treatment as patients do not have to travel to the severe asthma centre to receive their regular injections
- It increases capacity in the severe asthma centre to see new patients by freeing appointment slots
- It improves patient empowerment and self-management
- There is a cost saving to the NHS as medicines delivered via homecare are V.A.T. zero rated

### Types of homecare medicines services

Homecare medicines services can be separated into two main categories, Manufacturer sponsored (pharma funded) and NHS contracted schemes.

Manufacturer sponsored funded homecare medicines services are where one or more homecare providers are commissioned by a manufacturer to provide a homecare medicines service to the NHS or private patients.

The NHS is liable only for the cost of the product with the service costs (delivery and nurse led education and injection training) funded by the sponsoring manufacturer. This is a key factor driving the use of these services within the NHS compared to NHS funded homecare services.

Manufacturers often establish sponsored homecare medicines schemes to improve the patient experience, product accessibility and to enable manufacturer access to usage data.

NHS funded services are those which the NHS procures from the open homecare medicines service market. NHS funded services are often established to ensure compliance with Public Procurement Regulations and Royal Pharmaceutical Society Professional Standards for homecare medicines services.

Both product and service costs are payable by the local Trust or Commissioner. Costs are transparent and accurate usage data is made available to the Trusts. Services are procured at national, regional, and local level.

### Homecare medicines service and asthma biologics

For an asthma biologic to be appropriate for homecare it is preferable that it is available in an injectable form (autoinjector or prefilled syringe) for subcutaneous injection that the patient can be taught how to use. The position of homecare availability for asthma biologics is shown in table 1.

Table 1. Asthma biologics homecare medicines service

<i>Asthma biologic</i>	Available for homecare	Funding
<i>Benralizumab (Fasenra)</i>	Yes	AstraZeneca fund homecare
<i>Mepolizumab (Nucala)</i>	Yes	GlaxoSmithKline fund homecare
<i>Omalizumab (Xolair)</i>	Yes	NHS fund homecare
<i>Reslizumab (Cinqaero)</i>	No. Only available as an intravenous infusion.	N/A
<i>Dupilumab (Dupixent)</i>	Yes	TBC

## Homecare providers

The three main homecare medicines service providers for asthma biologics are:

- [HealthNet Homecare](#)
- [Lloyds Pharmacy Clinical Homecare](#)
- [Alcura](#)

## Homecare data for asthma biologics

An asthma biologics homecare medicines dashboard (Figure 1) has been produced as part of the Accelerated Access Collaborative (AAC)/ Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) Asthma Biologics Programme. The dashboard shows:

- At a national level, the proportion of all drugs combined (benralizumab, mepolizumab and omalizumab) prescribed as homecare. Dupilumab will added later
- At a national level, the proportion of benralizumab and mepolizumab combined (excluding omalizumab) prescribed as homecare
- At AHSN and Trust level, the proportion of all and individual asthma biologics prescribed as homecare
- At Trust level, benchmarked homecare prescribing for individual asthma biologics

This data can be used to establish a baseline and track progress on improvement initiatives.

## Improving homecare uptake

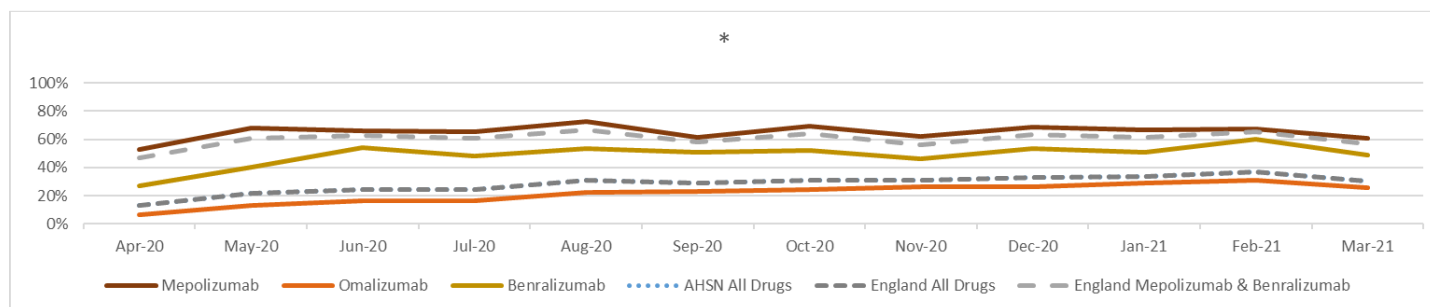
To ensure patient safety, it is essential that homecare medicines services are managed with sufficient pharmacy resource. The Chief Pharmacist or equivalent is the Responsible Officer for homecare medicines services; therefore, the management of services should be undertaken by the pharmacy team.

Trusts have access to Regional Homecare Specialists who can support with homecare medicines services. Several resources are available to support and improve homecare medicines services. These are listed below.

- [Professional Standards for Homecare Services \(rpharms.com\)](#)
- [homecare-services-handbook.pdf \(rpharms.com\)](#)
- [Homecare Handbook Appendices \(rpharms.com\)](#)
- [Evaluating the impact of pharmacy Homecare](#)
- [Does asthma control change following transition to home benralizumab administration?](#)
- [Does asthma control change when patients transition to home administration of mepolizumab?](#)

AHSN leads can support improvement of homecare medicines service uptake in their area by:

- Contacting local Trusts to understand any challenges and opportunities
- Sharing relevant case studies and resources from the asthma biologics programme with service leads
- Considering commissioner support needed to facilitate homecare medicines services



AHSN:  Measure: VMP Quantity

Trust:

	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21
<b>National</b>												
All Drugs Homecare %	12.9%	21.6%	24.6%	24.4%	30.9%	29.0%	31.2%	30.7%	32.7%	33.5%	36.9%	30.3%
Mepolizumab & Benralizumab Homecare %	47.1%	60.9%	62.5%	60.9%	66.8%	58.1%	63.7%	56.3%	63.6%	61.3%	65.0%	56.6%
*												
<b>All Drugs</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>21.6%</b>	<b>24.6%</b>	<b>24.4%</b>	<b>30.9%</b>	<b>29.0%</b>	<b>31.2%</b>	<b>30.7%</b>	<b>32.7%</b>	<b>33.5%</b>	<b>36.9%</b>	<b>30.3%</b>
Mepolizumab	53.1%	67.7%	65.7%	65.6%	72.7%	61.4%	69.3%	61.9%	68.4%	66.9%	67.5%	60.8%
Omalizumab	6.6%	13.3%	16.5%	16.2%	22.3%	23.1%	24.1%	26.6%	26.6%	28.8%	31.1%	25.9%
Benralizumab	77.2%	49.5%	54.2%	48.4%	52.7%	50.7%	57.0%	46.7%	53.2%	50.5%	60.1%	48.8%

Figure 1 Snapshot of the Asthma Biologics Homecare Dashboard