



British Hypertension Society

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January 2014

Professor Huon Gray, Department of Health
Lisa Nicholls, NICE
By Email

Dear Professor Gray and Ms Nicholls

Re: Hypertension Targets in the Quality Outcomes Framework

We write to you on behalf of the British Hypertension Society and Blood Pressure UK to raise our serious concerns regarding the proposed changes to the Quality Outcome Framework hypertension indicators proposed for 2014/15.

In 2010 we proposed that the NICE Quality Outcome Framework consider more stringent targets for blood pressure lowering than those contained within the QOF indicators (90% less than 150/90 mm Hg). This was based upon multiple clinical trials showing between 50-60% achieved a blood pressure target of 140/90 mm Hg or less. In 2011 the NICE Hypertension Guidance CG127 stated that 140/90 mm Hg was the optimal blood pressure target in the under 80 year olds. The Guideline also stated for the first time that the over 80 year olds should be treated to a target of 150/90 mm Hg.

A pilot study in general practice led by the NICE QOF team confirmed that at baseline a target of 140/90 mm Hg was attained in 52% of patients. Furthermore the pilot over 6 months showed that the application of this target led to almost 62% of hypertensives attaining a blood pressure of 140/90 mm Hg or less. There were also similar improvements with a different target in the very elderly.

The NICE QOF panel structured the points based on an escalator between 40-80% attaining 140/90 mm Hg to acknowledge this could be challenging and to recognize achievements in primary care.

We understand that as a result of negotiations with the General Practitioners Committee of the British Medical Association these new and important advances toward improved blood pressure control are to be retired. This would be out of line with NICE guidance and a tremendous mistake for public health in the UK. Our primary concern is complete loss of the 140/90 blood pressure target. We believe that rather than abandon the significant benefits in stroke reduction by simply reverting to 150/90 mm Hg an alternative approach should be taken. If we retain the 140/90 mm Hg target but reduce the threshold for maximal points from 80% to 60% attaining 140/90 mm Hg this would more closely reflect the achieved blood pressure in the NICE QOF pilot studies.

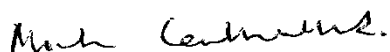
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We have summarized the new proposal and made two alternative suggestions, please see below.

We would very much appreciate the opportunity to discuss this further with you before any final decision is made.

Yours sincerely



Professor Mark Caulfield, former President, BHS



Professor Tom MacDonald, President, BHS



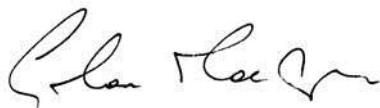
Professor Adrian Brady, Vice President, BHS



Dr Terry McCormack, General Practitioner and Secretary, BHS



Professor Neil Poulter, Chair, BHS Guidelines & Information Service Working Party



Professor Graham MacGregor, Chairman, Blood Pressure UK

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QOF and BP summary of changes 2014/15

ID	Indicator wording	13/14 Points	13/15 Threshold	14/15 Points	14/15 Threshold	Time frame
HYP 001	Contractor maintains a register	6		6		12
HYP 006	The % of patients with hypertension in whom the last blood pressure reading (measured in the preceding 12 months) is 150/90 mmHg or less	10	44-84	20	45-80	12

BHS proposed change version 1

ID	Indicator wording	13/14 Points	13/15 Threshold	14/15 Points	14/15 Threshold	Time frame
HYP 001	Contractor maintains a register	6		6		12
HYP 006	The % of patients with hypertension in whom the last blood pressure reading (measured in the preceding 12 months) is 150/90 mmHg or less	10	44-84	10	45-80	12
HYP 007	The % of patients aged 79 or under with hypertension in whom the last blood pressure reading (measured in the preceding 12 months) is 140/90 mmHg or less	50	20-80	10	40-60	12

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BHS proposed change version 2

Retire CHD 002, DM 002, DM 003, STIA 003 and CKD 002. Releasing 61 points.

ID	Indicator wording	13/14 Points	13/15 Threshold	14/15 Points	14/15 Threshold	Time frame
HYP 001	Contractor maintains a register of patients with hypertension, Stroke, TIA or CKD	6		7		12
HYP 006	The % of patients with hypertension, CHD, Stroke, TIA or CKD in whom the last blood pressure reading (measured in the preceding 12 months) is 150/90 mmHg or less	10	44-84	40	45-80	12
HYP 007	The % of patients aged 79 or under with hypertension Stroke, TIA or CKD in whom the last blood pressure reading (measured in the preceding 12 months) is 140/90 mmHg or less	50	20-80	40	40-60	12