

# NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

## Health Technology Evaluation

### Equality impact assessment – Scoping

#### Molnupiravir for treating COVID-19

The impact on equality has been assessed during this evaluation according to the principles of the NICE Equality scheme.

1. Have any potential equality issues been identified during the scoping process (draft scope consultation and scoping workshop discussion), and, if so, what are they?

In the original appraisal (TA878), the following potential equalities issues were raised:

- COVID-19 disproportionately affects some people with protected characteristics, including older people, people with disabilities and people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Vaccine uptake is lower in certain groups, including pregnant women, people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Telephone assessments may be challenging for those who are deaf or lack capacity.
- Age as an independent risk factor for progression to severe COVID-19
- Some technologies being contraindicated during pregnancy

During scoping consultation for this topic, the following further issues were raised:

- Molnupiravir is an oral medication meaning people with protected characteristics who may encounter additional burden from travelling for treatment are not required to travel. This may also reduce exposure of patients with protected characteristics to other patients with communicable diseases in hospital or clinic settings.

- Molnupiravir does not have any drug-drug interactions or require dose adjustments so it provides an alternative option for physicians treating patients with multiple comorbidities and medications
- Molnupiravir can be used in patients with renal impairment, the prevalence of which is higher in Black, Asian and other minority ethnic backgrounds, which may not apply to alternative treatments
- A disproportionate number of people unable to shield are from minority ethnic groups, due to the higher likelihood that they are in employment without remote working options, higher likelihood to work in occupations with higher risk of exposure to COVID-19, and higher likelihood of needing to use public transport to travel to work

2. What is the preliminary view as to what extent these potential equality issues need addressing by the Committee?

Similarly to TA878 the committee will consider if and how the risks of outcomes, developing severe COVID-19 and the suitability of different treatments may differ by different groups within the population in its decision making.

3. Has any change to the draft scope been agreed to highlight potential equality issues?

No. The scope notes that Some people are at a higher risk of severe COVID-19 outcomes because of underlying risk factors. These risk factors have been defined within an [independent advisory group report](#) commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care. Data from the UK also suggest that mortality due to COVID-19 is strongly associated with older age, male gender, deprivation and Black, Asian and minority ethnic family background.

4. Have any additional stakeholders related to potential equality issues been identified during the scoping process, and, if so, have changes to the stakeholder list been made?

No.

**Approved by Associate Director (name):** Ross Dent

**Date:** 04/04/2024