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Andrea Sutcliffe
Executive Lead, NICE Project Team
Inhaled corticosteroids for asthma (in adults and children)
National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
MidCity Place
71 High Holborn
London
WC1V 6NA

Dear Ms Sutcliffe

NICE appraisals of inhaled corticosteroids for asthma in adults and children

The British Lung Foundation (BLF) is the only charity working to support the eight million people in the UK with *all* lung conditions.

We welcome these reviews, by NICE, into the use of inhaled corticosteroids for asthma for both adults and children.

British Lung Foundation policy is such that we do not recommend or endorse any drug therapy, however, we believe it is vital that patients are treated appropriately with the most effective treatments available. We have, therefore, concentrated our remarks on the areas where we feel we can most effectively contribute to the debate.

The key issues with relation to the use of corticosteroids in the treatment of asthma in adults and children are as follows:

- Poorly controlled asthma has a significant impact on individuals and their families, particularly in terms of their quality of life. In addition, this also places a significant burden on the NHS in both primary and secondary care through GP consultations and hospitalisations
- Any review of asthma treatment by NICE should include data on the cost impact of effective disease management on NHS budgets as well as the cost effectiveness or otherwise of any drug therapy
- Non-adherence to medication is a significant issue in asthma care, particularly among teenagers. More work needs to be done to work with people living with asthma to understand their reasons for non-compliance and examine different routes to encourage them to take their medication as directed for maximum effect. In this regard, an individual may have poorly

controlled asthma, purely as a result of their non-compliance with their medication regime and not related to the type of medication they have been prescribed

- Another issue contributing to poorly controlled asthma is inhaler-technique. If an individual is not using their inhaler in the most effective way, their asthma may not be as well controlled. Again, this would not be related to the type of medication they were taking, purely the delivery device used
- Evidence comparing different treatments is poorly drawn and more research is required to compare different types of inhaler and their effectiveness
- We believe it is vital that any appraisal of the effectiveness of inhaled corticosteroids takes account of other issues which have a significant impact on the effectiveness of a treatment regime such as non-compliance and poor inhaler technique

We support the submission made to you by the General Practice Airways Group which draws similar conclusions.