



Scoping

Individual Patient Funding Requests

CEO Sponsor

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Summary

Expected Start Date

Q2

Expected End Date

Q3

Aim

What is the overall intention or purpose of this activity?
Write a short statement describing what you want to achieve.

Gain a greater understanding of our current position and key challenges, identifying opportunities to mitigate the financial risk to the NWJCC and better inform future commissioning decisions by undertaking an IPFR and Prior Approval Deep Dive focussing on current activity and spend and explore opportunity to utilise prior approval system.

Background / Context

Summarise why this work is needed, what prompted it, and any relevant context (e.g., policy drivers, service gaps).

The NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee (NWJCC) operates Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) and Prior Approval processes to manage access to treatments that are not routinely commissioned, are high-cost, or require controlled use. These processes support lawful, transparent, and equitable decision-making, ensuring alignment with Prudent Healthcare principles and responsible stewardship of public resources.

A 2025 audit demonstrated substantial assurance of the processes however internal discussions note a lack of clarity on financial spend, with allocations for non IPFR/Prior approvals included in the budget. The pathway for prior approvals also has potential to be streamlined to ensure timely approval and greater financial oversight, including provider contract update and use of a prior approval system. In addition, a review of cases across HBs to ensure equity of access is required, along with review of policies linking to multiple requests. Reducing IPFR and prior approval requests will improve efficiencies in the IPFR team and Finance, it will also ensure greater clarity within policies and equitable access.

Finally, a review of practice across HB IPFR panels specifically in relation to minimum value thresholds of cases discussed at panel and opportunities to improve efficiencies



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Scope

In Scope

- Cases approved in 2024/2025 & 2025/2026 through IPFR and prior approval
- All activities included in IPFR budget
- All Wales data

Out of Scope

- Cases approved outside the agreed time period
- Review of panel decisions
- Full Policy review and update (recommendations to be made)
- Full review of contracts, contract performance, commissioned provider mix.

Dependencies

- Access to data from finance and data from IPFR panel and prior approval to determine type of IPFR and Prior approval requests and source of these and review of budget and spend (committed vs actual spend)

Risks & Constraints

- Time and capacity of IPFR team to deliver and support from finance and commissioning team
- NHS England is undergoing a tender process which may impact which Prior Approval System is in use from 2028

Deliverables

List the main tangible outputs or products that will be produced by this activity (e.g., recommendations report, service specification, review findings, training materials).

- Report & recommendations (where appropriate) to Joint Committee **Q3**
- Take findings into the JCC strategy session workshop in August **Q2**
- IPFR demand and alignment with policy or need for service development/ pathway changes **by Q3**
- Variation analysis across Wales **by Q2**
- Clarifying finance streams **by Q2**
- Update of IPFR process to include minimum value threshold for cases to go to panel **by Q2**
- Provider analysis and understanding referral pathways and flows for prior approvals **by Q3**



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Lifecycle Phases & Target Dates

Use this table to show the main phases of your activity, from concept to review. Enter the expected target date for each phase to give a clear overview of when major parts of the work should be completed.

Milestone	Concept	Define and Scope	Design and Plan	Deliver	Close	Review & Learn
April 2026	April 2026	April 2026	May 2026	September 2026	September 2026	October 2026

Intended Outcomes & Success Measures

Describe what will be achieved and how success will be measured (e.g., recommendations accepted, service improved, targets met, actions implemented).

- Prepare report for JCC by September 2026 on the separation of true IPFR from business-as-usual Prior Approvals considering process and finance.
- Identify recommendations for pathway improvements. Including considering provider contract changes and IPFR/ Prior Approval database transformation to improve data collection, governance and patient access to treatment.
- Identify potential policy changes required.
- Develop Implementation plan.

Outcomes will be clear understanding of spend and allocations, improved time to approval and reduced inappropriate IPFR and prior approval requests.

Governance Roles

List the key roles and individuals responsible for providing strategic oversight, leadership, governance and delivery coordination for this activity. Collectively, these roles will form the core governance and project board structure supporting oversight, decision-making and progression of the work.

Role	Identified Person	Part of Board
CEO	Abigail Harris	✓
Sponsor	Iolo Doull	✓
Delivery Lead	Oliver Harness	✓
Delivery Co-Lead	Rachel Gemine	✓

Stakeholders

List any individuals or groups already identified as important to involve, consult, or inform for this activity. This helps ensure early engagement and awareness.

Name	Organisation	Role
IPFR Panel	NWJCC	Inform of activities
Finance Partners	NWJCC	Activity Data