Flash Glucose Monitoring (FreeStyle Libre®)  
Patient Information Leaflet

In March 2019, NHS England issued guidance that explains about national arrangements for funding of Flash Glucose Monitoring for relevant diabetes patients. The guidance can be accessed via the link below.

The national guidance describes which patients will now be able to receive FreeStyle Libre® sensors on the NHS. The North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) will be following the national guidance from 1st April 2019.

FreeStyle Libre® sensors can be purchased privately by those who do not meet the national criteria.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who will determine if I meet the NHS England criteria?
   Your specialist will determine if you meet the NHS England criteria. Your GP or practice nurse will not be allowed to determine if you meet the NHS England criteria.

2. Do I need to book an appointment immediately with my diabetes specialist?
   No. If you are already being seen by a specialist he/she will determine if you meet one of the criteria for NHS funding at your next routine contact with them (clinic appointment). The specialists will not be able see all the people meeting the national criteria straight away.

3. What do I do if I have been discharged from the specialist?
   Your GP or practice nurse will pre-screen you against the national criteria. If you meet the pre-screening criteria they will refer you to the specialist for assessment to determine if you qualify for a prescription.

4. Can my GP prescribe FreeStyle Libre® sensors before I have been seen by my diabetes specialist?
   No. GPs and practice nurses must wait for authorisation to prescribe from the diabetes specialist team.

5. What happens next, if I do meet one of the criteria for NHS funding?
   After approval by the specialist team, you will be required to complete either online or face to face training, around use of the FreeStyle Libre® or interpreting readings - (exceptions considered on an individual basis e.g. learning disability in which case 1:1 training can be arranged). Proof of completion of training is required for ongoing prescription of freestyle libre after 6 months. You will be required to complete the Consumer Libre Academy on line modules 1-9 before your 6 month review with your HCP before your Libre funding can continue.
   The link to the Libre Academy is: https://progress.freestylediabetes.ie/sign-up

For those who have not previously used libre, a group start will be arranged where you will be provided with a free Starter Pack that consists of the Freestyle Libre® monitor and one sensor, be shown how to use FreeStyle Libre® correctly, and have an opportunity to ask any questions.

If you have been using FreeStyle Libre® already:
- **Privately funded before the 1st April 2019** – Online training required then discussion with specialist about appropriate use. Initial Libre prescription provided by specialist team with letter to GP for ongoing prescription and follow up arranged.
- **Previous initiation by a diabetes specialist** - your GP will now take on responsibility for ongoing prescribing following authorisation by the specialist team.

You will be required to attend follow up appointments and use your sensors >70% of the time.

6. **What happens next, if I don’t meet one of the criteria for NHS funding?**
Carry on testing your blood glucose levels using finger pricking. FreeStyle Libre® is available for private purchase.

7. **How long does the Starter Pack last?**
The Starter Pack contains one monitor and one sensor. Each sensor lasts 14 days, then it needs to be replaced with a new one.

8. **Where will I get further supplies of sensors from?**
You will get further supplies from your GP/ pharmacy, and not from your diabetes specialist. Your GP will issue a prescription for two sensors every 28 days (26 per year).

9. **What if I can’t get an appointment with my GP before my first sensor (from the Starter Pack) runs out?**
You will need to continue monitoring your blood glucose levels using your blood glucose meter and blood glucose testing strips until you receive your first prescription for sensors from your GP.

10. **What do I do if any of my sensors are defective?**
If a sensor is defective, contact the manufacturer (Abbott) using the Customer Careline number below to obtain a replacement. You will need to call on the day that your sensor falls off, and keep the displaced sensor carefully. Please note that Abbott will only issue a maximum of 3 replacement FreeStyle Libre® sensors per person. If this is an ongoing issue please discuss with your specialist or Abbott.
Abbott Customer Careline - 0800 170 1177

11. **What else will I need to do if I am prescribed FreeStyle Libre®?**
You will need to:
- Attend all appointments as required with your specialist diabetes MDT and/ or GP/practice nurse.
- Follow all the advice given at your FreeStyle Libre® training session.
- Attend (or have attended) a Type 1 diabetes structured education programme (DAFNE, BERTIE or equivalent as available locally) *if at all possible.*
- Perform at least eight scans per day, and also perform blood glucose testing as advised by your specialist diabetes MDT.
- Reduce the current quantity of your blood glucose testing strips when requested to do so.
- Ensure that you are scanning at least 8 times a day to obtain >70% of the data download
- Complete online Libre Academy modules 1-9 during first six months of Libre use to qualify for further use
12. Can the diabetes specialist or my GP withdraw prescribing of FreeStyle Libre® sensors?
Yes. You will no longer be prescribed the sensors on the NHS if:
   - You wear the sensors for less than 70% of the time
   - You do not take carry out appropriate actions, as advised by your diabetes specialist
   - There is no demonstrable improvement in your diabetes self-management
   - You no longer fulfil the criteria for funding

13. Will I get a refund if I was self-funding and meet the criteria?
No. You will not be able to get a refund.

For patients who are pregnant, the supply of sensors will be stopped after a total treatment period of 12 months (inclusive of post-delivery period), unless the patient fulfils any of the other criteria for funding.

All patients will be reviewed by the diabetes specialist 3-6 months after starting to use FreeStyle Libre® to determine if on-going prescribing is appropriate, then individual follow up agreed thereafter.

14. Will my GP continue to prescribe blood glucose testing strips for me if I meet the criteria for use of FreeStyle Libre®
Yes. However, it is anticipated that your use of blood glucose testing strips will reduce.

15. Will GPs prescribe FreeStyle Libre® blood glucose testing strips?
No. You will be expected to use one of the cost-effective brands as approved by the local guidance. FreeStyle Libre® blood glucose testing strips are not cost-effective and GPs should not prescribe them.

16. Can drivers use the FreeStyle Libre® sensors to monitor blood glucose levels prior to driving?
The DVLA has updated the guidance on glucose testing prior to driving which now permits the use of interstitial glucose readings, e.g. using FreeStyle Libre® and Capillary Glucose Monitoring systems for group 1 drivers only. Note that finger prick tests are still required (even for group 1 drivers) under certain circumstances. Further information can be accessed here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/778023/inf294-a-guide-to-insulin-treated-diabetes-and-driving.pdf

17. What about patients who are already self-funding FreeStyle Libre® Prior to 1st April 2019?
Patients who have been purchasing FreeStyle Libre® privately (and wish to continue using the device) will need to continue to self-fund until they are reviewed by their diabetes specialist at their next routine clinic appointment. North East Essex CCG will only fund FreeStyle Libre® for patients who fulfill the NHS England eligibility criteria, and decisions will not be based on what has already been purchased.

18. What if I wish to use (or continue using) FreeStyle Libre® but I don’t meet the NHS England eligibility criteria?
You will need to purchase FreeStyle Libre® privately. This can be done directly from the manufacturer (https://www.freestylelibre.co.uk/libre/ or Tel: 0800170 1177). Patients may also be able to self-purchase the sensors directly from their usual pharmacist.

19. Will the recommendations for funding be reviewed?
Yes. It is anticipated that the NHS England recommendations for funding will be reviewed in two years.
20. How to discard the sensors?
These should be placed in your sharps bins.

21. If I have additional questions, who should I contact?
Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service.

Telephone: 01206 918 730
Address: PALS, North East Essex CCG, Aspen House Stephenson Road, Colchester CO4 9QR Email: neecrg.PALS@nhs.net