



**COVID-19 Therapeutics Advice & Support Group  
(CTAG)  
Terms of Reference**



#### **COVID-19 Therapeutics Advice & Support Group partners**

Royal College of Physicians Joint Specialty Committee for Infectious Disease (lead partner)  
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust  
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board  
Guys & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust  
Imperial College Healthcare  
Imperial College London  
Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust  
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde  
Public Health England  
Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust  
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust  
Sheffield Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust  
St George's University of London  
The Christie NHS Foundation Trust  
The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
University College London  
University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust  
University of East Anglia  
University of Oxford

## 1. Target audience

This document has been written to support the COVID-19 Therapeutics Advice & Support Group (CTAG) in executing its role effectively. Clarity will be provided on the role and remit of CTAG and its relationship to its subgroups. It will inform NHS Provider Trusts of the processes that the Group follows for the management of hospitalised patients across the UK.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. CTAG

COVID-19 Therapeutics Advice & Support Group (CTAG) is a subcommittee of the Joint Speciality Committee for Infectious Disease (JSC ID), acting as a formal advisory group to Royal College of Physicians (RCP).

CTAG was established through discussion between Drugs and Therapeutics Committees, Area Prescribing Committees and specialists to provide advice and support in the management of COVID-19 whilst national guidelines evolve.

Its intention is to bring together national advice from:

- Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
- National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)
- Chief Medical Officers' (CMO) office
- NHS England (NHSE)
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)
- Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC)
- All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG)

CTAG is a short life working group designed to provide a bridge to specific advice from relevant national Health Technology Assessment bodies e.g. NICE, Scottish Medicines Consortium, All Wales Medicines Strategy Group, or other national organisations. CTAG will work collaboratively with the MHRA, NHSE and NICE to support the seamless transition from CTAG advice to the advice that supersedes it. Updated ToR will be developed in October 2020 if CTAG needs to continue. The current parenting arrangement with the Royal College of Physicians will apply until June 2023 but will be open to review.

CTAG is the parent group for two key subgroups initially, each with specialist membership from UK NHS Provider sites. Additional subgroups may be considered with RCP agreement for incorporation under the CTAG umbrella as the pandemic develops.

- **Antivirals**; originally involving Infectious Diseases and Virology specialists from the High Consequence Infectious Diseases (HCID) Network, and subsequently expanded to include multidisciplinary representation from non-HCID NHS Providers
- **Immunomodulatory**; drawing membership from the Hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis Across Specialities Collaboration (HASC), a group already formed for management and research of HLH and have expanded remit to include hyper-inflammation associated with COVID-19

### 2.2. CTAG subgroups

Each subgroup acts as a specialist panel for discussion and consensus on medicines to be used for patients with COVID-19 both within and outside of a clinical trial, whilst taking into account advice from key national stakeholders.

### 3. Objectives

- Support Provider Trust Drugs & Therapeutics Committees, specialists and non-specialists on the appropriate use of licensed, off-label and unlicensed medicines for the treatment of COVID-19 infection and associated clinical syndromes
- Provide clarity on the clinical trials available to Provider Trust sites and how they sequence with one another along the patient pathway
- Provide a summary of the available evidence for licensed and unlicensed medicines for the treatment of COVID-19 infection and associated clinical syndromes
- Provide summary guidance in a structured and timely manner
- Provide advice to the Royal College of Physicians through the Joint Specialty Committee for Infectious Diseases.

### 4. Frequency of meetings

#### 4.1. CTAG

Meetings are held every two weeks or as required. Given current restrictions on travel and social distancing, the use of virtual conferencing tools is highly encouraged.

#### 4.2. CTAG subgroups

Meetings are held weekly initially, with a move to every two weeks once workplans are established. Given current restrictions on travel and social distancing, the use of virtual conferencing tools is highly encouraged.

### 5. Position Statement methodology

The principle deliverables for CTAG will be in the form of Position Statements. The Position Statements will be updated in response to national developments and superseded when specific guidance is published by UK health technology assessment bodies (e.g. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, All Wales Medicines Strategy Group or Scottish Medicines Consortium).

Information contained within Position Statements will not represent a 'recommendation', however is intended to provide support to healthcare professionals when considering available treatment options in specific patients with COVID-19.

CTAG keeps abreast of national developments through:

- NICE Daily Awareness Summaries
- Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) Central Alerting System (CAS)
- CTAG Subgroup meetings for knowledge sharing
- Twice-weekly checking of the following resources:
  - <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/covid-studies/>
  - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/>
  - <https://www.nice.org.uk/>
  - <https://www.scottishmedicines.org.uk/>
  - <http://www.awmsg.org/>
  - <https://www.awttc.org/coronavirus-covid-19-therapeutic-advice/covid-19-specific-areas-interest>
  - Social media and national press

Position Statements will include evidence-summaries for all investigative medicinal products (IMPs) included within NIHR prioritised studies. Due to the rapidly evolving landscape and the urgency for interim guidance, a wholly systematic approach to assessing the evidence (such as GRADE) will not be performed. For each IMP, evidence relating to (1) SARS-CoV-2 and (2) related conditions will be summarised separately and identified via the following methods:

- 1) SARS-CoV-2: Cochrane 'Living systematic reviews' database of Covid-19 studies
  - a) Randomised controlled trials [https://covid-nma.com/living\\_data/index.php](https://covid-nma.com/living_data/index.php)
  - b) Observational studies [https://covid-nma.com/observational\\_studies/](https://covid-nma.com/observational_studies/)
- 2) Related conditions: EMBASE, MEDLINE and Google Scholar literature searches

CTAG will not undertake independent evidence-synthesis (e.g. meta-analysis) or health-economic evaluation (e.g. cost-effectiveness analyses).

Subjective judgments will be solely the consensus opinion of CTAG subgroup members.

## **6. Role**

### **6.1. CTAG**

- Receive and address requests from members of each of the subgroups
- Standardise standards and outputs from CTAG subgroups

### **6.2. CTAG subgroups**

- Support Provider Trusts in appropriate use of medicines in accordance with guidance from national organisations and bodies (see Section 2.1)
- To escalate any concerns to the NHS England Regional Medical Directors and Regional Chief Pharmacists

## **7. Responsibilities**

### **7.1. Convenor (CTAG and subgroups)**

- Work with the secretariat to ensure meeting agenda and papers are disseminated in a timely manner
- Ensure the meetings run to schedule
- Support members to identify constructive solutions to ensure documents can be developed
- Inform Joint Speciality Committee for Infectious Disease about work completed and significant changes to the work plan

### **7.2. Members**

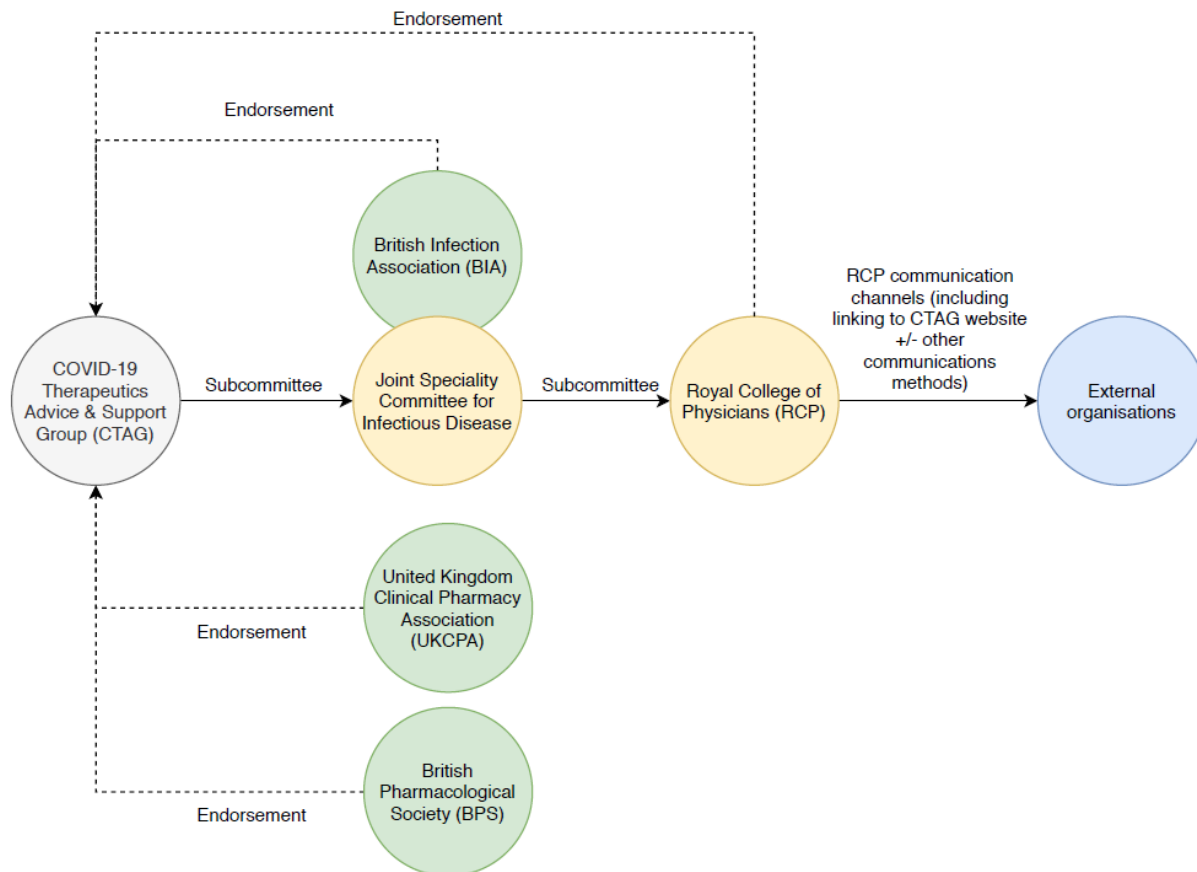
- Provide professional advice on safe and effective medicines usage for COVID-19 infection
- Take ownership of the Group's decisions within own organisation
- Provide cross-group support
- Regularly attend the meeting, nominating a deputy with sufficient authority if unable to attend
- Participate in telephone conferences and on-line working to achieve objectives between meetings within agreed timeframes
- Contribute to agenda items, ensure appropriate preparation and follow through on actions to completion
- Be sufficiently aware of agenda items to be able to drive forward points under discussion
- Be aware of the wider health economy and provision of health care when making decisions

- Declare any financial and personal conflicts of interest, including an online declaration of interests to the Royal College of Physicians.

### 7.3. Joint Speciality Committee for Infectious Disease

- Approve CTAG ToR including any proposed changes to CTAG subgroups
- Oversight of minor updates to CTAG Position Statements
  - CTAG do not require specific RCP/JSC ID approval before publishing minor updates e.g. changes to clinical trials open to recruitment, or adding new evidence that does not impact the advice
- Review major amends to CTAG Position Statements
  - CTAG do require specific RCP/JSC ID approval to publish major amends e.g. adding new evidence and changing the advice

## 8. CTAG relationships with the Royal College of Physicians and other organisations



## 9. Membership

### 9.1. CTAG subgroups

- Antivirals subgroup; see Appendix 1
- Immunomodulatory subgroup; see Appendix 2

### 9.2. CTAG

- Chair
- Convenor of each subgroup
- Lead pharmacist of each subgroup
- Clinical trials representation
- Public health representation
- Representation from each of the devolved nations

CTAG is supported by North Central London Joint Formulary Committee (NCL JFC) secretariat pharmacists. See Appendix 3.

The RCP will utilise its communications channels to provide linkage to the CTAG website and other communications in line with existing approaches to its advisory groups. The RCP will not be liable for associated publication costs or any further support without prior agreement.

## 10. Quorum

### 10.1. CTAG subgroups

- Convenor
- 4 x Acute Trust representative

### 10.2. CTAG

- Chair
- Either Convenor or Lead pharmacist for each subgroup

## 11. Related documents

<https://www.ctag-support.org.uk/docs/antivirals.pdf>

<https://www.ctag-support.org.uk/docs/immunomodulators.pdf>

## Document control

Date	Version	Amendments
04 June 2020	1.0	New document

## Appendix 1 – Antivirals subgroup membership

Secretariat support provided by the NCL JFC team.

Subgroup membership (listed in alphabetical order, first by organisation, then surname):

Organisation	Name	Role
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust	Prof Martin Llewelyn <sup>†</sup>	RCP Joint Specialty Committee for ID
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	Dr Jonathan Underwood	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
Guys & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Anna Goodman <sup>*</sup>	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
	Professor Beverly Hunt	Consultant, Thrombosis and Haemostasis
	Dr Jonathan Edgeworth	Consultant, Microbiology
	Dr Nicholas Price	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
	Dr Manu Shankar-Hari	Consultant Intensivist
	Mr Paul Wade <sup>†</sup>	Consultant Pharmacist, Infectious Diseases
Imperial College Healthcare	Prof Graham Cooke	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
Imperial College London	Dr Katrina M Pollock	Clinical Research Fellow in Vaccinology
London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust	Dr Laurence John	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Michael Beadsworth	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde	Dr Andrew Seaton	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
Public Health England	Dr Meera Chand	Consultant, Microbiology
	Dr Jake Dunning <sup>†</sup>	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	Dr Lance Turtle <sup>†</sup>	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust	Sir Dr Michael Jacobs	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
	Dr Sanjay Bhagani	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Anne Tunbridge	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
	Dr Thushan de Silva	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
St George's University of London	Prof Tom Harrison	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Dr David Price	Consultant, Infectious Disease
	Dr Matthias Schmid	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
	Dr Yusri Taha	Consultant, Virology
University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Michael Brown <sup>*</sup>	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
	Prof Mahdad Noursadeghi <sup>†</sup>	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
University of Oxford	Prof Timothy Peto	Consultant, Infectious Disease

<sup>\*</sup> Subgroup co-convenors    <sup>†</sup> Members tasked with position statement maintenance



## Appendix 2 – Immunomodulatory subgroup membership

Secretariat support provided by the NCL JFC team.

Subgroup membership (listed in alphabetical order, first by organisation, then surname):

Organisation	Name	Role
The Christie NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Amit Patel <sup>†</sup>	Consultant, Haematology & Intensive Care
The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Christopher Duncan <sup>*†</sup>	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
Sheffield Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Rachel Tattersall <sup>†</sup>	Consultant, Adolescent and Adult Rheumatology HASC Co-Chair
University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Aisling Carr <sup>†</sup>	Consultant, Neurology
	Mr James Hartwell <sup>†</sup>	Pharmacist
	Dr Maria Leandro <sup>*†</sup>	Consultant, Adolescent and Adult Rheumatology
	Dr Jess Manson <sup>†</sup>	Consultant, Rheumatology HASC Co-Chair
University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Andrew Duncombe <sup>†</sup>	Consultant, Haematology

*\* Subgroup co-convenors † Members tasked with position statement maintenance*

The immunomodulatory subgroup will refer specific agenda items to HASC for consideration. HASC has approximately 150 members with multispecialty representation from across the UK; for more information regarding HASC, please contact [Rachel.tattersall@nhs.net](mailto:Rachel.tattersall@nhs.net). For the purposes of clarity, HASC is not a subgroup of CTAG although HASC co-Chairs do form part of the immunomodulators subgroup.

## Appendix 3 – CTAG membership

Secretariat support provided by the NCL JFC team.

CTAG members (listed in alphabetical order, first by organisation, then surname).

Organisation	Name	Role
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust	Prof Martin Llewelyn	RCP Joint Specialty Committee for Infectious Diseases
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	Dr Jonathan Underwood	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
Guys & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Anna Goodman	Consultant, Infectious Diseases Co-Convenor of the Antivirals subgroup
	Mr Paul Wade	Consultant Pharmacist, Infectious Diseases Lead Pharmacist of the Antivirals subgroup
	Prof Beverley Hunt	Consultant, Haematology
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde	Dr Andrew Seaton	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
Public Health England	Dr Jake Dunning	Public health representative
The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Christopher Duncan	Consultant, Infectious Diseases and Co-convenor of the Immunomodulatory subgroup
University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Dr Reecha Sofat*	Consultant, Clinical Pharmacology CTAG Chair
	Dr Maria Leandro	Consultant, Adolescent and Adult Rheumatology Co-Convenor of the Immunomodulatory subgroup
	Dr Mike Brown	Consultant, Infectious Diseases Co-Convenor of the Antivirals subgroup
	Prof Mahdad Noursadeghi	Consultant, Infectious Diseases Representative of evidence summary group
	Mr James Hartwell	Lead Pharmacist of the Immunomodulatory subgroup
	Dr Pritesh Bodalia	Pharmacist, Clinical Trials
University of East Anglia	Prof Yoon Loke	Consultant, Clinical Pharmacology RCP Joint Specialty Committee for Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics
University of Oxford	Prof Tim Peto	Co-Leader for the Infection Theme of the Oxford Biomedical Research Centre
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	Dr Michael Hunter	Consultant, Infectious Diseases
Patient representative	TBC	

\* Chair