



Office for Life Sciences

Office for Life Sciences Bulletin – 02 February 2024



OLS Introduction

The Office for Life Sciences (OLS) is a joint unit between the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) and Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).

This bulletin aims to keep the life sciences sector up to date on the latest government announcements and wider opportunities in policy areas which may be of interest to the sector.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list, please email:

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News

NEW – Horizon Europe Helps Make It Happen

Last Autumn, the UK agreed to join Horizon Europe – giving UK researchers and businesses of all sizes access to the world's largest R&D collaboration programme. Applicants can bid for a share of the more than £80 billion available through the programme. Applicants will have the opportunity to collaborate with international organisations to deliver innovations to solve societal challenges and foster economic growth through a competitive and world-leading programme, with the average Horizon Europe funding award to a UK business £450,000.

Read more [here](#).

NEW – NHS Cancer Programme's Innovation Open Call Round 3 Launched

Following the success of Rounds 1 and 2 of the NHS Cancer Programme's Innovation Open Call, NHS England has announced the launch of Round 3 of its funding competition for innovation in the early detection and diagnosis of cancer. The competition is open to all types of innovation, including but not limited to, medical devices, in vitro diagnostics, digital health solutions, behavioural interventions, software, artificial intelligence, and new models of care. Applicants can apply for up to £4 million for projects up to a maximum of 24 months. NHS Cancer Programme and SBRI will be hosting a launch webinar on Tuesday 6 February.

Read more [here](#) and register for the webinar [here](#).

UPDATE – NIHR i4i and OLS Real World Evidence Programme Applications Opened

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) i4i & OLS Real World Evidence Programme application window has now opened and will close on 27 March 2024. The aim of the call is to support consortia to address real world evidence gaps to accelerate widespread

adoption of technologies recommended for early use in the NHS through the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Early Value Assessment (EVA). Two upcoming events will be held on this, including an 'Analytical and technology partner matchmaking event' and 'Q&A Session'.

Read more and register [here](#).

NEW – IfATE consultation on Employer-led approvals system for Lifelong Learning Entitlement now live.

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) have launched a consultation to help shape employer-led approvals system for Lifelong Learning Entitlement. This consultation is seeking views on: the qualification categories used for approval; criteria and guidance relating to modularity; and ways in which IfATE might ensure the new system is accessible for all users. Responses are welcome from employers; awarding bodies; colleges, independent training providers and universities; professional, statutory and regulatory bodies; and learners. The consultation will close on 01 April 2024.

Read more [here](#).

NEW – MHRA Announces Two New UK Approved Bodies to Certify Medical Devices

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has designated two new UK Approved Bodies (LNE-GMED UK and Scarlet NB UK), delivering increased capacity for the certification of the performance and safety of medical devices, for healthcare professionals and the public.

Read more [here](#).

NEW – Rezzayo Approved to Treat Adult Patients with Invasive Candidiasis

The MHRA has approved the medicine Rezzayo (rezafungin) to treat a fungal infection called invasive candidiasis.

Read more [here](#).

NEW – Omjjara Licensed for Anaemic Myelofibrosis Patients to Treat the Symptoms of Their Disease

The MHRA has approved the medicine momelotinib (Omjjara) to treat the symptoms experienced by adult myelofibrosis patients who have moderate or severe anaemia (a low number of red blood cells in the bloodstream).

Read more [here](#).

NEW – From 31 January New Valproate Safety Measures Apply

From 31 January 2024, new regulatory measures are in place to reduce the known harms from valproate, including the significant risk of serious harm to the baby if taken during pregnancy and the risk of impaired fertility in males.

Read more [here](#).

NEW – GROW Researcher Development Programme Applications Opened

The Mental Health Incubator, supported by the NIHR, has opened applications for the 2024 intake of the GROW Researcher Development Programme. The scheme offers a fully funded professional development programme for early career mental health and, for the first time, addictions researchers in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, or Wales who have completed a PhD and who are moving towards an independent research career. GROW participants benefit from six monthly workshops, 1:1 career coaching with a professional coach, and an active peer support network – and more. Applications are open until 05 March 2024.

Read more and apply [here](#).

NEW – Updated NICE Guidance Recommends More Targeting of Antibiotics to Those at the Highest Risk of Suspected Sepsis

On Wednesday 31 January 2024, NICE made new recommendations on risk evaluation and management of suspected sepsis for people aged 16 or over who are not and have not recently been pregnant, in mental health, ambulance and acute hospital settings. This recommendation is included in a partial update of NICE's recognition, diagnosis, and early management of suspected sepsis guideline alongside further advice on assessing patients most at risk, when to give antibiotics and identifying the source of infection.

Read more [here](#).

NEW – Digital Prescriptions Go Live in NHS App

Following a successful trial last year involving over a million users, NHS England is adding the new service to the app which will allow patients to see when their prescriptions have been issued and view their prescribed medication.

Read more [here](#).

NEW – 500,000 Women Benefit from Cheaper Hormone Replacement Therapy

Since launching on 1 April last year, more than 500,000 women in England have accessed cheaper HRT - the main treatment for negative menopause symptoms - helping to save hundreds of pounds in prescription charges.

Read more [here](#).

NEW – Over 10,000 NHS Pharmacies Begin Treating People for Common Conditions

Patients in England will be able to get treatment for seven common conditions at their high street pharmacy from the 31 January 2024 without needing to see a GP, as part of a major transformation in the way the NHS delivers care.

Read more [here](#).

NEW – Dual Agreements Cement UK-Canada Science and Innovation Ties

The UK and Canada have signed a dual set of agreements which cements their collaboration on science and innovation, while also laying out a new agreement on AI compute – one of the fundamental building blocks which sits at the heart of how AI is used and developed.

Read more [here](#).

NEW – International Expertise to Drive International AI Safety Report

Expert Advisory Panel unveiled, capturing expertise from the UK, US, China, France, Republic of Korea, and other leading AI nations. The report brings together best existing scientific research on AI Safety from across the globe, with initial findings to be released ahead of the Republic of Korea's AI Safety Summit in the Spring. First announced at the AI Safety Summit, the report has been re-branded as the International Scientific Report on Advanced AI Safety.

Read more [here](#).

NEW – Business and Tech Heavyweights to Boost Productivity Through AI

Overseen by the Technology Secretary and the Prime Minister's Special Adviser on Business and Investment, pioneering AI companies will join forces with business leaders to bring their expertise to bear on encouraging adoption of AI across the private sector to boost productivity, fuel innovation, and deliver growth in all areas of the economy.

Read more [here](#).



Useful Links

- The [Office for Life Sciences](#) homepage provides the latest updates and information on the governments work with the life sciences sector.
- Information around Horizon Europe funding can be found [here](#).
- Guidance for businesses on Brexit can be found [here](#).
- Access the 'Check How to Export Goods' tool [here](#) for the information you need to export goods out of the UK market.
- If you're a UK business selling goods or services to Europe, you can contact the UK government [export support team](#) by phone or online.
- Access the 'Check How to Export Goods' tool [here](#) for the information you need to export goods out of the UK market.
- Click [here](#) for more information and advice on exporting.
- In England, [Growth Hubs](#) can advise on local and UK Government business support.
- Register for HMRC's free [Trader Support Service](#) if you are moving goods between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Click [here](#) to view the latest weekly Trader Support Service (TSS) bulletin.
- The most up-to-date guidance on the [Windsor Framework](#) is on GOV.UK, including information on moving goods into, out of, or through Northern Ireland.
- If you need to get in touch with the MHRA, please use the contact details below:
Email: MHRACustomerServices@mhra.gov.uk
Phone: 0203 080 6000