



Improving together

Drug switch leads to savings, while maintaining quality

The Ophthalmology and Pharmacy teams have delivered upwards of £100,000 savings per year, by transitioning to a biosimilar version of intravitreal Ranibizumab, a drug used to treat conditions such as age-related macular degeneration.

When the drug's original patent expired, it became possible for other companies to make their own clinically equivalent versions of intravitreal Ranibizumab, known as biosimilars.

This competition in the market meant that the NHS could secure significant savings by purchasing the biosimilar version, which in the South West was Ongavia®.

Behind a simple switch of drug, there were lots of complex issues to work through involving different teams and partner organisations who use a joint formulary.

The multidisciplinary team used the Improving Together approach to identify barriers, develop solutions and work through how to implement the switch as smoothly as possible.

This required extensive collaboration and support from the team in the Trust's Transformation and Improvement Hub to address technical issues, staff training, changes in processes and managing stock levels to minimise waste in the run-up to implementation.

Ongavia® is now used routinely in Ophthalmology, saving the local NHS thousands of pounds each year, while maintaining the same high standard of treatment for patients.