Further to your request for information dated 25 October 2015 the information requested is below:

NHS Dartford Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has recently introduced a prescribing quality scheme, which has a focus on polypharmacy. The aim of the scheme is to ensure the identification of ongoing need and clinical benefits of optimising prescribed medicines and de-prescribing when clinically appropriate.

This has been prompted by a national focus on polypharmacy which has reported the growing risks associated with adverse drug events.

This scheme will recognise the resource required for improvement in patient care and health outcomes whilst achieving financial stability or the CCG.

Benefits for patients will include:

- Improved health outcomes through optimal medicines use
- Reduction in adverse events related to medicines
- Patient/carer empowerment to be actively involved in their care
- Reduction in unused medicines and improvement in compliance/concordance.
- An opportunity to develop a shared understanding between the patient and clinician about medicines and their role in the patient’s care.

All Practices are able to participate and the following principles (which are based on the Department of Health strategies to achieve cost effective prescribing) will be utilised:

- The scheme should reward improvement in patient care and health outcomes. It is therefore important that the Prescribing Quality Scheme does not simply reward low cost prescribing, but should include criteria relating to the quality of prescribing.
- To ensure financial stability within the CCG it is vital that its member practices maintain control of prescribing costs. However, a reduction of costs at the expense of patient health or healthcare is not acceptable.
- The scheme should encourage practices to consider both quality and cost, and hence cost-effectiveness of their prescribing, and reward practices appropriately.
- The CCG recognises that practices already achieving the targets specified in the scheme should be rewarded in the same way as those practices meeting the targets for the first time.

Practices wishing to participate need to sign up to the scheme and then produce an action plan, which must be shared and discussed at the CCG’s locality meetings, so that benefits from shared
learning can be achieved. Practices will then be monitored against progress on a monthly basis so that any support required can be identified as soon as possible.

The action plan as a minimum should include:

- Practice plans on ensuring clinically appropriate polypharmacy and de-prescribing using the NSH Specialist Pharmacy Services, Seven Steps to Managing Polypharmacy and the NSH PrescQIPP: Safe and Appropriate Medicines Use Toolkit
- Repeat prescribing protocol
- Signed copies of Medicines Optimisation QIPP plan audits
- Any actions including investment by the Practice in resources that the Practice deem appropriate for the delivery of the scheme e.g. practice based support such as practice pharmacists.

Support from the CCG’s Medicines Optimisation Team will be available for the implementation of QIPP plan audits and any further areas of work that individual Practices can deliver, together with guidance. This will enable practices to be supported throughout.