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Respiratory Medicine

Optimising outcomes for adults with Cystic Fibrosis taking CFTR modulators by individualising care: Personalised data linkage to understand treatment optimisation (PLUTO), a novel clinical framework.

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Abstract:	Cystic Fibrosis (CF) is a life-limiting, inherited condition in which a novel class of oral medicine, CFTR modulators, has revolutionised symptoms and health indicators, providing an opportunity to evaluate traditional treatment regimens with the hope of reducing burden. Additionally, there is cautious optimism that life expectancy for people with CF born today could ultimately compare to that of the general population. Given this potential, there is a need and requirement to optimise treatment to balance burden with the best clinical outcomes for each person with CF in an individualised manner. Personalised data-Linkage to Understand Treatment Optimisation (PLUTO) is

	<p>a clinical framework, developed within the 14-Centre UK CFHealthHub Learning Health System collaborative, designed for use at an individual level for people with CF taking CFTR modulators. The PLUTO framework encourages use of two routinely collected clinical outcome measure (FEV1 and BMI) to determine health status. Where FEV1 or BMI trends suggest that optimal health outcomes are not being achieved for a person with CF, PLUTO supports consideration of adherence to both CFTR modulators and inhaled therapy to help guide the next steps. PLUTO is designed to support people with CF and their clinical teams to individualise care and optimise outcomes for those taking CFTR modulators, using data available in routine clinical encounters.</p>
Response to Reviewers:	Please see attached "Response to Reviewer's" file.

1 **Optimising outcomes for adults with Cystic Fibrosis taking CFTR modulators by**
2 **individualising care: Personalised data linkage to understand treatment optimisation**
3 **(PLUTO), a novel clinical framework.**

4

5 **INTRODUCTION**

6 Cystic Fibrosis (CF) is a long-term condition resulting from an inherited genetic defect in the
7 CF transmembrane conductance regulator (CFTR) gene (1). It affects approximately 162,000
8 people worldwide including 11,000 people in the UK, where current life expectancy of
9 someone born today with CF is 56 years (2, 3). The leading cause of death is respiratory failure,
10 resulting from recurrent lung infections and chronic inflammation (4).

11

12 Traditionally, treatment for CF lung disease targeted the downstream consequences of CFTR
13 dysfunction in the respiratory tract, such as chronic infection and mucus hyperviscosity,
14 through physical and inhaled (typically nebulised) therapy (5). Over the past decade, a novel
15 class of oral medicine, CFTR modulators, have been developed, which restore or enhance
16 function of the CFTR protein at the cellular level (6). There are currently four available CFTR
17 modulators. Two of these, ivacaftor (Kalydeco[®], Vertex Pharmaceuticals) monotherapy and
18 elexacaftor/tezacaftor/ivacaftor (ETI, Kaftrio[®], Vertex Pharmaceuticals) triple-therapy are
19 considered “highly effective” given impressive improvements in lung function and body mass
20 index (BMI) demonstrated in pivotal randomised controlled trials (RCTs) (7, 8). The advent of
21 highly effective CFTR modulators provides an opportunity to re-assess the role of the
22 traditional treatments with the intention of reducing treatment burden, which is a key priority
23 for the CF community (9).

24

25 With the list price of CFTR modulators exceeding \$250,000 per person per year, access is
26 predominantly restricted to those in high income countries, covering less than 20% of the
27 worldwide CF population (10, 11). ETI became available to people with CF in the UK through
28 a commercial access agreement within the National Health Service (NHS) in August 2020. As
29 ETI is a triple-therapy which also includes the active ingredient of ivacaftor monotherapy, it is
30 the only commercially available highly effective triple molecule combination CFTR modulator.
31 Approximately 90% of people with CF in the UK are eligible to receive ETI based on genotype
32 eligibility criteria (12).

33

34 ETI has the potential to transform the long-term outlook for people with CF, with some hope
35 that the life expectancy for people with CF could soon equate to that of the general
36 population, at over 80 years (13). This potential is predicated upon a reduction in the rate of

37 long-term lung function decline, which is typically measured by forced expiratory volume in 1
38 second (FEV₁). In the pre-ETI era, the percentage of predicted FEV₁ typically declined at a rate
39 of 2 percentage points (notation 2% used in this article) per year (14).

40

41 However, there is significant inter-individual variation in the magnitude of response to ETI.
42 Approximately 10% of participants in the ETI RCT treatment arm experienced either no
43 improvement or even a worsening in sweat chloride or FEV₁, whereas a further 10%
44 experienced FEV₁ improvements of over 30% (7). Recognising this, a framework was recently
45 proposed which attempts to optimise outcomes in those who appear to demonstrate a low
46 or absent response to ETI (15). This framework advises consideration of CFTR function
47 biomarkers, such as rectal organoids and complex alleles to distinguish between partial or
48 absent responses, though these measures are not routinely available in clinical practice.

49

50 ETI is the only commercially available triple molecule CFTR modulator, meaning that there is
51 no alternative for someone who experiences a partial or low response. Therefore, if ETI
52 treatment is already taken as prescribed but the clinical outcome is sub-optimal, then
53 optimising the concurrent use of pre-existing treatments for CF, including inhaled therapy,
54 may be the best therapeutic option. We propose a pragmatic approach which considers
55 adherence to both ETI and inhaled therapies, alongside FEV₁ and body mass index (BMI) data,
56 in determining how best to individualise care and optimise outcomes for adults with CF taking
57 ETI.

58

59 **THE PLUTO CLINICAL FRAMEWORK**

60

61 Personalised data-Linkage to Understand Treatment Optimisation (PLUTO) was
62 conceptualised in a single UK adult CF Centre and was then developed collaboratively with
63 clinicians across the CFHealthHub Learning Health System. The CFHealthHub Learning Health
64 System is a community of practice involving 14 UK adult CF centres. Adults with CF in these
65 centres are offered nebuliser devices with electronic data capture capability, thus making
66 real-time adherence data available to them and their clinicians through a cloud-based digital
67 platform (16). Adherence data then facilitates a personalised behaviour change intervention
68 which enables adults with CF to develop habits for treatment-taking (17). Whilst no change in

69 the primary endpoint of exacerbation frequency was identified, use of the CFHealthHub
70 intervention and digital platform delivered sustained, significant improvements in adherence
71 and habit, alongside a reduction in perceived treatment burden and rate of FEV₁ decline in a
72 52-week, 607-participant RCT (18). This demonstrated that CFHealthHub is an evidence-based
73 approach to supporting adherence to inhaled therapy.

74

75 Adults with CF should receive regular specialised multi-disciplinary team (MDT) reviews to
76 monitor health status and individualise their care (19). FEV₁ and BMI are routinely and widely
77 collected in all CF consultations (19). Accelerated FEV₁ decline is associated with worse
78 outcomes, including mortality (20, 21). BMI is a second key measure, with a falling or sub-
79 normal BMI associated with worse outcomes (5, 22).

80

81 The PLUTO framework can be applied at an individual level among adults with CF taking CFTR
82 modulators and recognises that not everyone requires identical treatment or a ‘one size fits
83 all’ approach. PLUTO proposes using routinely collected FEV₁ and BMI as indicators of health
84 status and then prompts consideration of adherence to CFTR modulators and inhaled therapy
85 (and other pre-existing CF treatments) or suspicion of new pathology in those with sub-
86 optimal health status (Figure 1).

87

88 **Step 1: Assess FEV₁ and BMI status.**

89

90 Step 1 considers six datapoints – pre-ETI FEV₁ and BMI, peak post-ETI FEV₁ and BMI, and
91 current FEV₁ and BMI. In line with the assumptions of the model suggesting the potential for
92 normal life expectancy (13), we propose a ≤1% annual decline in FEV₁ as a guide to determine
93 satisfactory lung function. This is consistent with other modelling work conducted in adults
94 with CF taking CFTR modulators, which highlighted the potential differences in life expectancy
95 with small (1%) changes in rate of FEV₁ decline over time (23).

96

97 In consultations, determining whether an FEV₁ or BMI trend is satisfactory is complex, in part
98 due to the natural variability of FEV₁ readings, requiring an individualised decision between
99 the adult with CF and experienced CF clinicians. Determining whether lung health is
100 satisfactory is also multi-faceted. For example, should someone on ETI have had FEV₁ stability

101 over 12 months at the cost of 70 days of inpatient intravenous antibiotics, their lung health
102 might not be considered fully optimised. Alternative lung outcome measure, such as lung
103 clearance index or imaging, are not routinely accessible but could be incorporated as part of
104 an individualised assessment of lung health, if locally available. Functional outcomes, for
105 example exercise testing, may also provide additional information and could be incorporated
106 into the framework by local clinical teams.

107

108

109 A stable BMI of ≥ 23 for males and ≥ 22 for females, has historically been associated with
110 optimal FEV₁ outcomes for adults with CF and is still the current CF Foundation recommended
111 weight target (24, 25). Since the introduction of CFTR modulators, overweight and obesity are
112 increasingly recognised but how these affect outcomes is still uncertain (26). The real-world
113 ivacaftor data demonstrated that BMI continued to increase over the first 5 years of
114 treatment (27). An unintentional fall in BMI should alert the clinical team to the possibility of
115 reduced adherence to the CFTR modulator, prompting direct investigation of adherence and,
116 where applicable, sweat chloride testing, as recently proposed for the investigation of
117 inadequate CFTR modulator response (15). If there remains uncertainty as to whether the
118 FEV₁ or BMI trend indicates optimal clinical status, especially with the natural variability of
119 FEV₁ readings, clinicians may arrange early follow-up to ensure that emerging decline is
120 identified more promptly.

121

122 **Step 2: Determine adherence to CFTR modulator.**

123

124 Routine electronic adherence data capture is currently unavailable for CFTR modulators.
125 Patient self-report is the most widely used method of measuring adherence without
126 electronic data capture, but the influence of social desirability bias and unreliable recall tends
127 to result in over-estimation (28). Medicines possession ratio (MPR) is also used to estimate
128 adherence and in the case of ETI, at least in the UK, it is possible to access delivery data from
129 pharmacy companies (29). However, receiving deliveries does not guarantee that medicines
130 are taken as prescribed (30). For the purposes of PLUTO, interruption of deliveries may
131 suggest lower adherence, but in adults with no interruption in deliveries, who are
132 experiencing weight loss or FEV₁ decline, tactful, sensitive clinical questioning needs to

133 explore the possibility of missed doses. Missed doses could be a particular problem for twice
134 daily CFTR modulator regimens, such as ETI, where recommendations specify a minimum
135 interval between doses. Clinicians may also explore factors known to impact CFTR modulator
136 effectiveness, such as ensuring they are taken with fat-containing food and pancreatic
137 enzyme replacement therapy (if indicated) and ensuring that doses are not being
138 inappropriately combined.

139

140 It should be noted that therapeutic drug monitoring is not routinely available and therapeutic
141 levels for ETI are not yet defined. Sweat chloride measurement may provide some insight into
142 short-term adherence but does not necessarily provide insights into longer-term adherence,
143 akin to using random glucose levels instead of continuous glucose monitoring to assess
144 glycaemic control of people with diabetes. Perhaps unsurprisingly, there is a lack of
145 association between changes in sweat chloride following initiation of CFTR modulators and
146 longer-term health outcomes e.g. FEV₁ at an individual level (31, 32).

147

148 **Step 3: Determine adherence to nebulised treatment regimen.**

149

150 Whilst effective, inhaled treatment can be highly burdensome and average adherence to
151 inhaled therapy regimens is approximately 40% (33-37). Higher adherence is associated with
152 better clinical outcomes (38). Self-reported adherence to inhaled therapy is unreliable and
153 the PLUTO approach advocates the use of objective adherence data from nebulisers with
154 electronic data capture capability, as recommended in a recent Cochrane review (39, 40).

155

156 The CFHealthHub Learning Health System provides a cloud-based platform for capturing
157 objective nebuliser adherence data. If electronic data capture devices are not available, then
158 alternate methods such as patient self-report or MPR may be used, though these methods
159 typically over-estimate adherence compared to electronic data capture. They are also unable
160 to provide granular data to support the targeting of an adherence intervention or to
161 determine, in real time, if adherence is improving with intervention (39).

162

163 Where adherence to inhaled therapy appears adequate, yet FEV₁ decline suggests suboptimal
164 lung health, clinicians are prompted to consider the development of new pathology. This may

165 include, but is not limited to, a new diagnosis of CF-related diabetes, allergic
166 bronchopulmonary aspergillus (ABPA), or infection with emerging lung pathogens such as
167 *Mycobacterium abscessus*.

168

169 Of note, common CF pathogens, such as *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, are characterised by an
170 ability to persist despite treatment with antimicrobial therapy (41). Prolonged use may lead
171 to antimicrobial resistance, necessitating periodic regimen reviews to maintain effectiveness.
172 For example, if a person with CF was prescribed inhaled colomycin for the preceding 10 years,
173 effectiveness may have waned. One way to assess this might be to alternate colomycin with
174 another antibiotic and then compare the FEV₁ by treatment month, or to use other inhaled
175 antibiotics such as aztreonam.

176

177 **Scenario 1: FEV₁ and BMI satisfactory**

178

179 Satisfactory FEV₁ and BMI indicate that the current treatment regimen and adherence are
180 sufficient, instilling confidence in clinicians and individuals with CF. This potentially allows
181 adults with CF to avoid being overburdened by treatment.

182

183 For example, if an adult with CF had reduced their treatment burden by discontinuing inhaled
184 therapy, but annual FEV₁ decline was $\leq 1\%$, they could simply be monitored, ensuring they
185 sustain a lower treatment burden, instead of being offered adherence support. How much
186 treatment is enough will differ for each person. When nebuliser adherence is objectively
187 measured within the PLUTO framework over time, it may be possible to determine a
188 personalised estimate of how much treatment is enough to maintain stability and achieve an
189 annual FEV₁ decline of $\leq 1\%$.

190

191 **Scenario 2: FEV₁ satisfactory but BMI unsatisfactory**

192

193 Satisfactory FEV₁ with declining BMI should prompt clinicians to assess for CF-related diabetes
194 or suboptimal pancreatic enzyme adherence (42, 43). It seems less likely that weight loss
195 would be related to CFTR modulator non-adherence if FEV₁ is stable, however each person
196 should be considered holistically.

197

198 **Scenario 3: FEV₁ unsatisfactory but BMI satisfactory.**

199

200 Real-world ivacaftor data suggest that unsatisfactory FEV₁, despite a satisfactory BMI, is the
201 most common scenario (27). The likely explanation is satisfactory CFTR modulator adherence
202 but unsatisfactory use of other pre-existing treatments, for example low adherence to inhaled
203 therapy. Pharmacy records confirming regular, uninterrupted CFTR modulator deliveries
204 would also suggest that an exploration of adherence to other pre-existing treatments may be
205 beneficial.

206

207 If adherence to inhaled therapy is low, then an appropriate next step may be to offer
208 adherence support, for example using the CFHealthHub habit formation intervention (17, 18).
209 If adherence to inhaled therapy is high, then optimisation of other pre-existing CF treatments,
210 for example airway clearance techniques, should be considered, as well as exploring the
211 possible development of new pathology (as discussed in Step 3).

212

213 **Scenario 4: FEV₁ and BMI both unsatisfactory**

214

215 This clinical picture suggests suboptimal adherence to CFTR modulators and/or inhaled
216 therapy and/or the development of new pathology. If CFTR modulator adherence appears
217 satisfactory, then the inhaled treatment regimen and adherence to it should be evaluated
218 alongside a search for new pathology and consideration of adherence to digestive enzymes,
219 as described in earlier sections. If inhaled therapy adherence is low, supporting this would be
220 a “treatable target” and is recommended alongside an investigation into new complications.
221 If adherence to both CFTR modulator and inhaled therapy regimens is unsatisfactory, it may
222 be wise to initially focus on CFTR modulator adherence and consider inhaled therapy
223 adherence support in due course.

224

225 **ILLUSTRATIVE CASE**

226

227 Following initiation of ETI, Alex, a 30-year-old person with CF, had a peak post-ETI FEV₁ of 95%
228 and BMI of 23.1. At review, Alex’s FEV₁ is still 95% and BMI is 23.4, both of which are

229 considered to be satisfactory. No other clinical concerns are identified. Alex's ETI deliveries
230 (assessed via pharmacy records) are regular, at the expected 3-monthly intervals, and Alex's
231 nebuliser adherence (assessed via CFHealthHub) is 94%. As such, Alex's current treatment
232 regimen and adherence to it may be considered satisfactory. Alex's treatment appears to be
233 optimised, which would suggest they are on course to achieve an optimal clinical outcome
234 (13). At this point, even if Alex was not using any inhaled therapy, there may be no immediate
235 need to discuss any treatment changes. The PLUTO flow chart could be followed as per Figure
236 2.

237

238 One year later, Alex's FEV₁ is 90% (from 95%) and BMI is 23.5. (from 23.1). Alex's ETI
239 adherence appears to remain high as does their nebuliser adherence at 98%. Although Alex
240 appears to be using inhaled therapy as prescribed, their FEV₁ has dropped by 5% over the
241 preceding year. This may alert clinicians to two possibilities. Firstly, the prescribed inhaled
242 therapy regimen may no longer be adequate. Secondly, there may be the emergence of new
243 pathology (Figure 3).

244

245 A further 6 months later, Alex's FEV₁ is 85%. BMI remains satisfactory, as does their ETI
246 adherence, but their nebuliser adherence has fallen to 30%. The fall in nebuliser adherence
247 may be contributing to the unsatisfactory FEV₁. Therefore, Alex may benefit from adherence
248 support (Figure 4).

249

250 **DISCUSSION**

251 PLUTO is a clinical framework developed by an MDT of clinicians across 11 UK adult CF
252 Centres, with the aim of individualising care for adults with CF and optimising outcomes. In
253 the CFTR modulator era, PLUTO supports clinicians to pay attention to specific pieces of
254 information (namely FEV₁, BMI and adherence), to structure clinical assessments and to guide
255 next steps.

256

257 Whilst FEV₁ and BMI are routinely used in CF consultations and offer a useful starting point
258 for assessing health status, CF is complex, and determining satisfactory lung health may
259 extend beyond trends in these measures. PLUTO can be adapted to suit local needs and
260 incorporate additional assessment tools, such as lung clearance index, if locally available.

261 After assessing an individual's health status, clinicians can then personalise their treatment
262 recommendations to balance treatment burdens with the aspiration of optimising health
263 outcomes. For example, someone not using inhaled therapy who has a stable FEV₁ may not
264 require an adherence support intervention. PLUTO is in line with the 2024 UK CF Trust
265 Standards of Care, which advocates the individualisation of care and shared decision-making,
266 accounting for people's perspectives on balancing the benefits of treatment with treatment
267 burden (19). Furthermore, by understanding the role of inhaled therapies at an individual
268 level, there is the potential to reduce the environmental impact of medicines waste. The
269 importance of this has been highlighted in the CF Trust Standards of Care and is in line with
270 the World Health Organisation's determination that climate change presents a fundamental
271 threat to human health (19, 44).

272

273 Optimisation of outcomes for adults with CF taking ETI is important because the availability
274 of highly effective CFTR modulators does not necessarily guarantee excellent health
275 outcomes for everyone. Ivacaftor, the first highly effective CFTR modulator did not quite
276 deliver the expected results. An open-label study among previous trial participants showed a
277 47% reduction in FEV₁ decline three years post-Ivacaftor (45), yet real-world UK data
278 demonstrated unabated FEV₁ decline such that FEV₁ returned to pre-ivacaftor levels within 5
279 years despite sustained weight improvements (27). Unless lessons from ivacaftor are learned
280 and attention is being paid to optimise the health outcomes of adults taking ETI, there is a risk
281 of squandering the potential long-term benefits.

282

283 Using a systematic framework like PLUTO to individualise care, with a view to optimising long-
284 term outcomes, is a critical facet of long-term condition care. Asthma was recently
285 revolutionised by the advent of monoclonal antibody therapy, referred to as 'biologics'. In
286 contrast to CF, where ETI is considered the only highly effective modulator for most adults,
287 there are multiple biologics available for adults with asthma, with different mechanisms of
288 action that can be considered for those with an inadequate response. A pragmatic approach
289 to choosing the correct biologic was recently published, recognising the importance of
290 individualising treatment decisions to optimise long-term outcomes (46).

291

292 A challenge of optimising outcomes in long-term conditions is the need to consider long-term
293 outcomes alongside short-term effects. For example, in people with atrial fibrillation (AF), oral
294 anticoagulation reduces the long-term risk of stroke (47). People with AF who commence oral
295 anticoagulation may derive no short-term benefit, and in fact, may experience side-effects.
296 However, the rationale for this treatment is for the long-term, not short-term, benefit. In
297 Rheumatoid Arthritis, another long-term condition, a “treat-to-target” approach improves
298 long-term outcomes and supports treatment decisions (48). This involves frequently assessing
299 disease activity, using a validated measure, and comparing it with a predetermined target. If
300 the target has not been reached, then treatment is revised, and usually escalated,
301 appropriately. By setting a target of achieving an annual decline in FEV₁ of ≤1%, PLUTO also
302 offers the potential for treat-to-target in CF. Over time, with more research, the pre-specified
303 health status targets for the best outcomes in those taking ETI can be further defined in CF.
304 PLUTO offers a starting point, which is consistent with the best available evidence (13).

305

306 A key strength of this work was collaboration between clinicians across 11 centres in the
307 CFHealthHub Learning Health System, where these measures are influencing CF care. PLUTO
308 is pragmatic and advocates the use of routinely collected measures (FEV₁ and BMI) and
309 currently available treatment options, which provides the opportunity for implementation in
310 any CF centre. PLUTO can also be adapted to incorporate novel measures or treatment
311 options as they become available in the future. By using FEV₁ and BMI within PLUTO, adults
312 with CF can be supported to make changes to their maintenance treatment regimens,
313 allowing the opportunity for burden reduction whilst optimising their outcomes. The
314 framework is flexible and can be adapted to local contexts. Indeed, we recognise the
315 importance of local context when it comes to implementation. Local experience, resources,
316 and epidemiology would mean some variation in the investigations and therapeutic strategies
317 (e.g. use of sweat chloride testing) from site-to-site. PLUTO can also be adapted to
318 incorporate novel measures or treatment options as they become available in the future.
319 PLUTO offers the potential to understand, at an individual level, how much maintenance
320 treatment is enough in the CFTR modulator era, whilst large population-based studies, such
321 as NEEMO, CF STORM and SIMPLIFY are underway (49-51).

322

323 Qualitative work understanding clinicians' perspectives and the application of the PLUTO
324 framework is ongoing, alongside an exploration of the views of adults with CF on treatment
325 taking in the post-CFTR modulator era. The perspectives of both clinicians and adults with CF
326 will be important in future refinements of the framework. Whilst it is inherent for clinicians
327 to want the best outcomes for their patients, the perspectives of the people living with CF
328 day-to-day must not be forgotten. A "satisfactory", or indeed "unsatisfactory", FEV₁, BMI or
329 adherence level for clinicians may not mirror what is considered "satisfactory" or
330 "unsatisfactory" to the person living with the condition. A single centre study suggests that
331 adults with CF are willing to trade substantial reductions in FEV₁ to reduce treatment burden
332 (52). However, it is crucial that both adults with CF and clinicians are fully informed of the
333 potential implications of decision-making to reduce treatments on long-term outcomes.
334 Intrinsic human cognitive biases, such as "present bias", can lead to decisions being made
335 based on short-term rather than long-term considerations (53).

336

337 *"Good Medical Practice"*, which sets out standards of care and behaviour for UK medical
338 professionals, states the duties to *"Protect and promote the health of patients and the public."*
339 and *"Listen to patients and work in partnership with them, supporting them to make informed*
340 *decisions about their care"*(54). A key skill for clinicians caring for individuals with long-term
341 conditions to promote health is the ability to sensitively highlight the sacrifices involved in
342 daily self-care by emphasising the long-term health benefits that today's efforts will yield in
343 the future. Likewise, to ensure that the person with CF is not reduced to a series of numbers,
344 as could be the case with any clinical framework, there is a need for clinicians to understand
345 and acknowledge context and the complex range of factors that influence health outcomes
346 and adherence, in line with the 2024 CF Standards of Care (19, 55).

347

348 A limitation of this framework is the inherent complexity in determining health stability. The
349 natural variability of FEV₁ measurements makes aiming for tight FEV₁ margins problematic, so
350 interpreting any single FEV₁ value involves paying attention to both trends over time, as well
351 as the presence of respiratory symptoms (56-58). Applying a 1% threshold in assessing short-
352 term changes in FEV₁ would be challenging, therefore clinicians may recommend that FEV₁ is
353 measured more frequently, and in a consistent way, to reveal trends. In the short-term (i.e.
354 visit-to-visit), the difference in clinical outcomes between a 1% and 3% decline in FEV₁ may

355 be minimal, but long-term modelling of life-expectancy suggests the cumulative effect may
356 be substantial. For example, a 1% annual decline may give a life expectancy into the 80s,
357 whereas a 2%, 3% and 4% decline may lead to a life expectancy closer to 60, 50 and 40 years,
358 respectively (23). Now that ETI has been available for four years in the UK, it seems an
359 appropriate time for clinicians to review lung function trends for adults with CF since starting
360 ETI to consider how an individual's rate of decline may influence their life expectancy.

361

362 Another limitation is the accurate measurement of adherence. CFTR modulator adherence
363 can be estimated through pharmacy delivery data but is mostly estimated through self-report,
364 which is notoriously inaccurate (39). CF Centres with access to nebuliser devices with
365 electronic data capture capability, such as those used within the CFHealthHub Learning Health
366 System, benefit from real-time objective adherence data, but we recognise that other centres
367 may be more reliant on delivery data or self-report, depending on local resources.

368

369 Lastly, it should be recognised that the intended application of PLUTO is for adults with CF
370 who are treated with CFTR modulators. Approximately 10% of the UK CF population are not
371 eligible for CFTR modulators and there are a proportion of people who discontinue CFTR
372 modulators for reasons such as intolerance. Whilst we expect PLUTO to be applicable to the
373 vast majority of adults with CF cared for at each CF Centre, this framework would require
374 adaptation for those not prescribed CFTR modulators.

375

376 **CONCLUSION**

377

378 CFTR modulators present an exciting opportunity in CF, but since their introduction, there is
379 uncertainty around the necessity of other long-established treatment regimens. PLUTO
380 provides a systematic framework to help to manage that uncertainty at an individual level,
381 and potentially balance the burdens and benefits of treatments. Using FEV₁, BMI and
382 adherence data, treatment can be individualised, optimised and re-evaluated at sequential
383 time points. PLUTO addresses uncertainties in applying population-level data to individuals,
384 supporting tailored management plans to optimise outcomes and fully leverage CFTR
385 modulators.

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391

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396

397 **FIGURE LEGENDS**

398 Figure 1: The Personalised data-Linkage to Understand Treatment Optimisation (PLUTO)
399 Clinical Framework. FEV1 = forced expiratory volume in one second. BMI = body mass index,
400 CFTRm = Cystic fibrosis transmembrane conductance regulator modulator

401 Figure 2: Demonstration of how the PLUTO framework may support clinicians and a person
402 with CF to determine if the current treatment regimen is adequate.

403 Figure 3: Demonstration of how the PLUTO framework may support clinicians and a person
404 with CF to determine whether new pathology or a change in treatment regimen should be
405 considered.

406 Figure 4: Demonstration of how the PLUTO framework may support clinicians and a person
407 with CF to determine whether supporting adherence to inhaled therapy should be
408 considered.

409

410

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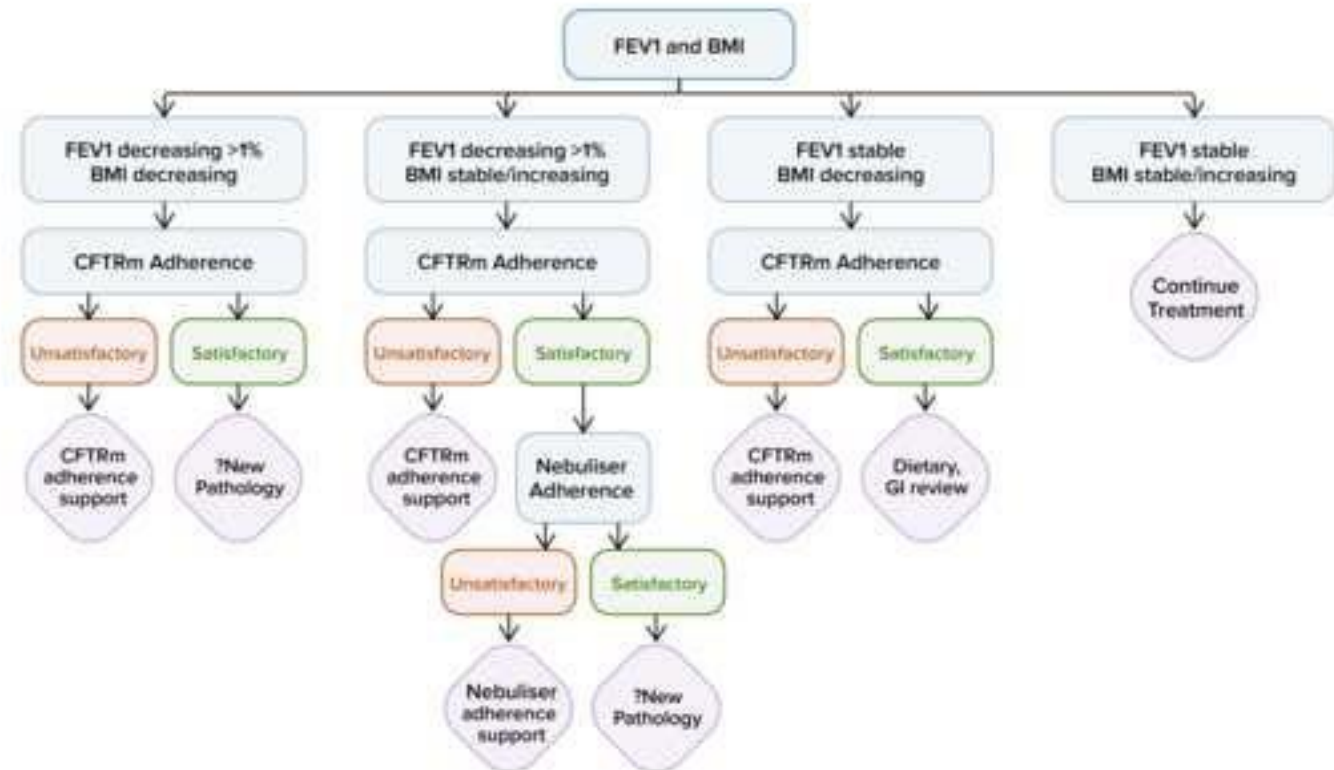
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Personalised data-Linkage to Understand Treatment Optimisation

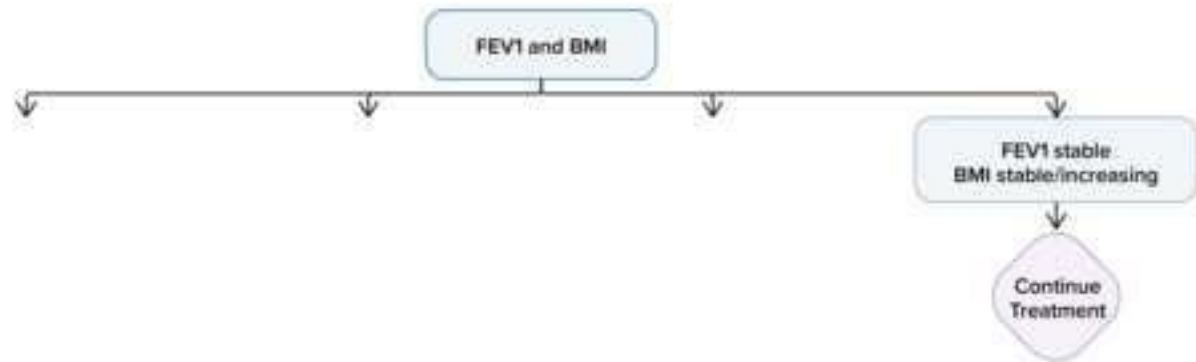
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- 2 Determine CFTRm adherence and offer support if needed
- 3 Determine nebuliser adherence and offer support if needed





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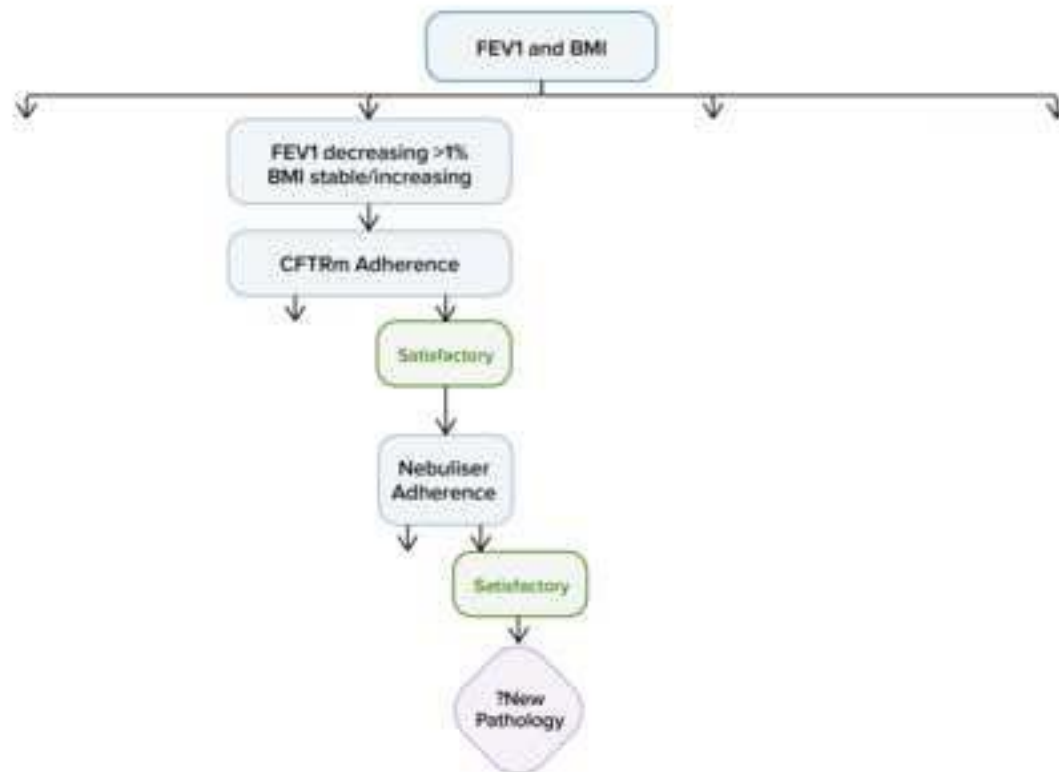
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