

PERSONAL STATEMENT FOR MULTIPLE TECHNOLOGY APPRAISAL (Venom Immunotherapy for Bee and Wasp venom allergy)

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STATEMENT ON VENOM IMMUNOTHERAPY (VIT)

Venom allergy is a common cause of anaphylaxis and may be fatal. In UK wasp venom allergy is more common. Bee venom allergy is usually seen in bee keepers, their family members and where there is occupational risk.

VIT is the only specific treatment currently available for patients with history of life threatening allergic reaction or anaphylaxis to bee and wasp stings. It should also be considered in patients with non-life threatening generalised allergic reactions to bee/wasp stings with associated 'risk factors' including occupation (eg: bee keeper, family member of a bee keeper, gardener etc.), raised baseline plasma tryptase/mastocytosis, co-morbid conditions (asthma, cardiac problems), remoteness from emergency medical care and in those with anxiety about future sting/s (following previous generalised but non-life threatening reaction).

The optimal duration of treatment is 3 years and this has long term efficacy.

There is some evidence in the literature that VIT improves health related quality of life.

VIT is safe but has a rare but real risk of systemic reaction including anaphylaxis. This treatment should be delivered only by specialists with experience and knowledge in this field and in a centre with facilities for treatment of anaphylaxis. VIT must not be carried out in primary care.