

Self Care Commissioning Policy

August 2017

This policy applies to patients for whom the following Clinical Commissioning Groups are responsible:

- NHS South Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- NHS Redditch & Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- NHS Wyre Forest Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

Collectively referred to as the Worcestershire CCGs

COMMISSIONING STATEMENT:

- The Worcestershire CCGs expect that where suitable treatments are available to buy, patients with minor conditions suitable for self-care will purchase their own medication from general retailers (for General Sales List medicines) or over-the-counter from community pharmacies whenever it is appropriate to do so.
- All prescribers within the Worcestershire CCGs area, including non-medical prescribers, GPs, out-of-hours and A&E departments, should review their prescribing practice to ensure that patients appropriate for self-care are advised to purchase their own treatment rather than provided with a prescription.
- This policy applies to:
 - All patients registered with a Worcestershire GP or attending a healthcare appointment in Worcestershire.
 - All patients, whether or not they pay for their prescriptions. **Exemption from prescription charges does not exempt an individual from self care for minor conditions.**

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01905 681956**

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Lead Executive/Director:	Mari Gay
Name of originator/author:	Anne Kingham, Primary Care Medicines Commissioning Lead
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Equality & Diversity Impact Assessment	

Key individuals consulted in developing this document

Name	Designation
CCG Governing Body members	
CCG Medicines Commissioning Team	
Worcestershire Local Medical Committee	

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1. Definitions

- 1.1 Policy: A policy is a plan of action which is then applied as concrete programmes and actions. Policy documents will be prescriptive by nature and will detail expectations for the actions of individuals in a particular subject area, setting the parameters within which individuals will operate.
- 1.2 OTC: Over the counter medicine is a general term encompassing medicines that are available without a prescription. They may be Pharmacy Only (P) or General Sales List (GSL).
- 1.3 Self-management/ Self care: term used to include all the actions taken by people to recognise, treat and manage their own health. They may do this independently or in partnership with the healthcare system.

2. Scope of policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to all services contracted by or delivered by the NHS in Worcestershire including:
- GP practices
 - Out of hours and extended hours providers
 - Acute Hospitals
 - Outpatient clinics
 - NHS community providers
 - Independent providers
 - Community pharmacy
- 2.2 This policy applies to all prescribers within the contracted services; general practitioners, locum and junior doctors, trainees and community practitioners, supplementary and independent non-medical prescribers within Worcestershire.
- 2.3 This policy applies to:
- 2.3.1 All patients registered with or attending a healthcare appointment in Worcestershire.
- 2.3.2 All patients, whether or not they pay for their prescriptions. **Exemption from prescription charges does not exempt an individual from self care for minor conditions.**
- 2.4 Patients who are not eligible for treatment under this policy may be considered on an individual basis where their GP or consultant believes exceptional clinical circumstances exist that warrant deviation from the rule of this policy.

3. Background¹

- 3.1 Self care is defined by the Department of Health as a part of daily living and includes the actions people take for themselves, their children and their families to stay fit and maintain good physical and mental health.
- 3.2 Currently around 20% of a GP's time and 40% of their total consultations are used for minor ailments and common conditions at a cost on average of £2 billion per year to the NHS.
- 3.3 There is growing evidence to show that supporting self-care improves symptom management, general health, quality of life and patient satisfaction.

- 3.4 Self-care impacts the use of services by decreasing primary care consultations, visits to outpatients, A&E attendances, use of hospital resources and admittance in to secondary care.
- 3.5 By educating patients about self-care and providing support materials, demand on GP's time could be reduced, allowing more time for treating patients with complex health problems and long term chronic illnesses.

4. Relevant National Guidance and Facts

- 4.1 The NHS Plan published in 2000 highlighted self care as key to modernising the NHS.
- 4.2 Putting Patients First – the NHS Business Plan (2014/15-2016/17) describes several objectives, one of which is about promoting self care and putting patients in control to enable people to live as independently as possible.
- 4.3 57 million GP consultations every year are for minor ailments that could be self-treated at home. This takes on average, one hour per day of GP's time and costs the NHS £2 billion per year.¹
- 4.4 Additionally, minor illness and injuries account for approximately three quarters of A&E attendances of which 15% have the potential to be treated with self-care at home.¹
- 4.5 Prescribed self-care medicines across England & Wales cost an estimated £70million for the period of Oct-Dec -16 (NHS Business service authority ePACT March 2017)

5. Equality Statement

- 5.1 All public bodies have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to set out arrangements to assess and consult on how their policies and functions impact on race equality. This obligation has been increased to include equality and human rights with regard to disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and religion.
- 5.2 South Worcestershire, Redditch and Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest CCGs endeavour to challenge discrimination, promote equality, respect human rights, and aim to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, and population, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.
- 5.3 All staff are expected to deliver services and provide care in a manner which respects the individuality of patients and their Carer's and as such treat them and members of the workforce respectfully, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion/belief, disability and sexual orientation.
- 5.4 Providers and Commissioners are expected to use the appropriate interpreting, translating or preferred method of communication for those who have language and/or other communication needs. Practitioners will need to assess that prescribing practice is fair and equitable for all groups covered under the Equality Act 2010 and that they are implementing the Accessible Information Standard.

6. Minor Conditions and Medicines Suitable for Self Care

The following tables list conditions and appropriate medicines that are freely available to purchase over the counter or are considered to have a limited clinical value.

All the conditions included are listed on NHS Choices website as ones that can be treated at home with over the counter products.

Internal Medicines	Notes
Pain killers for adults: paracetamol, ibuprofen and co-codamol 8/500mg	Acute Supplies should not be prescribed. If long term treatment is required, prescribe as ordinary tablets due to increased sodium content of soluble tablets. Patients should be advised to purchase low cost generic preparations where possible because branded preparations can be costly. There is no evidence to support superior effectiveness of any of the higher cost niche marketed products.
Painkillers for children: Paracetamol/ ibuprofen suspension (Calpol®/ Nurofen®)	Acute supplies should not be prescribed. Parents should be advised to purchase low cost generic preparations where possible because branded preparations can be costly. There is no evidence to support superior effectiveness of any of the higher cost niche marketed products.
Cough mixtures	There is no clinical evidence for the use of expectorants and demulcents. Most coughs associated with viral illness are self-limiting and resolve within 3 weeks.
Anti-diarrhoeals	Prescribe for chronic bowel conditions only. Available to purchase over the counter for acute episodes if required.
Laxatives	Available to purchase over the counter for acute use in healthy non pregnant patients who are not taking opiates and do not have complications of their constipation.
Travel medicines	Travel medicines are not an NHS provision. Self care and purchase should be advised.
Colic treatment	Infacol is available to purchase for colic. Colief is available to purchase for lactose intolerance.
Vitamin supplements and tonics	Only prescribe for alcohol excess (thiamine), proven vitamin D deficiency and specific medical conditions.
Iron tablets	If haemoglobin is normal but ferritin low, offer lifestyle advice and patients can purchase over the counter supplements
Hay fever preparations	Only prescribe antihistamines for chronic rhinitis and urticaria and for children under 6. Only prescribe nasal steroids to patients under 18 years*.
Threadworm tablets	Available to purchase over the counter Only prescribe for children aged 6 months to 2 years*
Indigestion remedies	Available to purchase over the counter
Folic acid and vitamin supplements for pregnancy	400mcg available to purchase over the counter Only prescribe 5mg if clinically required

*Due to licensing restrictions for over the counter sales

Topical Medicines	Notes
Emollients	Prescribe only for dermatitis, eczema or psoriasis Emollient guidance Note – colloidal oatmeal containing emollients should not be prescribed. They have a higher acquisition cost and no clear criteria for where they should be used in favour of more cost effective emollients
Bath additives	These should not be prescribed due to a lack of supporting evidence and the increased risk of slips/ falls.
Head lice treatment	Wet combing is recommended Lotions/ shampoos and combs available to purchase over the counter
Barrier creams	Available to purchase over the counter for nappy rash
Topical antipruritics for the relief of itching and skin irritation eg chicken pox	Available to purchase over the counter
Sun creams	Only prescribe for patients who meet ACBS criteria: Protection from UV radiation in abnormal cutaneous photosensitivity from genetic disorders or photodermatoses
Mild acne treatment	A wide range of products are available to buy over the counter
Antifungal skin creams and powders	Available to purchase over the counter
Antifungal creams and pessaries for vaginal and vulval infections	One off or infrequent episodes are suitable for self care
Topical non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and rubefaciants	Most strains, sprains and sports injuries should be treated with over the counter preparations. Prescribing of topical rubefaciants for acute or chronic musculoskeletal conditions is not supported. Position statement
Cold sore treatments	Available to purchase over the counter
Warts and verrucae	Only prescribe for sexual health/GUM indications and diabetes

External Medicines	Notes
Uncomplicated conjunctivitis	Only prescribe for children under 2*
Decongestant nasal sprays	Available to purchase. Discourage long term use as can lead to rebound symptoms
Lozenges/mouthwashes/ oral sprays/ teething gels	Available to purchase over the counter
Ear wax drops	Olive oil and ear wax drops available to purchase over the counter
Toothpaste and Gingivitis treatments	Refer patient to their dentist or advise products are available to purchase over the counter
Nasal steroid sprays for hayfever	Only prescribe nasal steroids to patients under 18*

*Due to licensing restrictions for over the counter sales

7. References

1. Prescqiip briefing document. Self care for minor ailments. January 2015
Accessed at: <https://www.prescqiip.info/resources/send/141-self-care-webkit/1748-t8-self-care-for-minor-ailments>

8. Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact and Risk Assessment has been completed for this project. Please click on the following icon for the document



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