**Prescribing for Clinical Need Policy**

**East Lancashire CCG** **will not fund the prescribing of medicines and treatments for minor, short-term conditions where:**

* **self-care is the most appropriate route**
* **medicines and treatments are available to buy over the counter**

**East Lancashire CCG will not fund the prescribing of medicines and treatments for ANY medical condition where:**

* **there is insufficient evidence of clinical benefit or cost-effectiveness**
* **the medical condition has no need of clinical treatment**

**Summary**

In developing local commissioning policies, the CCG will commission only treatments or services which accord with all of the following principles:

* + Appropriateness
	+ Effectiveness
	+ Cost-effectiveness
	+ Ethics
	+ Affordability

A number of treatments which should be considered a LOW PRIORITY are detailed within this policy.

**Criteria for inclusion on the Low Priority Prescribing List:**

* Treatments used for minor ailments, which are in nature self-limiting.
* Treatments where there is insufficient evidence of clinical benefit or cost- effectiveness.
* Preparations where there may not be a clinical need to treat.

Self-care is widely acknowledged as an important solution to managing demand and keeping the NHS sustainable. Supporting people to self-manage common conditions such as coughs and colds could help bring down the 57 million GP consultations each year for minor ailments, a situation which costs the NHS approximately £2 billion and takes up to an hour a day on average for every GP.

Promoting the concept of self-care and increasing the awareness that there are alternatives to making GP appointments, or attendance at OOHs or A&E departments with minor conditions, will encourage patients to explore self-care in the future, so changing the culture of dependency on the NHS.

**Clinicians should only prescribe medicines that are known to be clinically effective**

**and provide a health benefit to patients, at a cost which is acceptable to the local health economy.**

**Policy Rationale**

East Lancashire CCG advise that only treatments that are clinically effective and provide a clear health benefit to patients are prescribed on NHS prescriptions. This is to ensure that NHS resources provide interventions with a proven health gain for the population. Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG’s) are encouraged to prioritise resources based on evidence of the clinical effectiveness and safety of treatments, their cost effectiveness and on which interventions provide the best health outcomes.

In the case of treatments which can be prescribed on NHS prescriptions, East Lancashire CCG advise that clinicians review all treatments that provide limited health benefit. The treatments are considered a LOW PRIORITY and not suitable for prescribing unless patients fall into an exception category.

Some medicines that are used to treat minor ailments do not require the patient to be seen by a GP. These products can be purchased from pharmacies and supermarkets. Pharmacists are experts on providing advice around minor ailments; pharmacies are easy to access without an appointment and most provide local Minor Ailments Schemes commissioned by the CCGs. This will free up GP time to see more complex patients.

Some other products are clinically ineffective or are not cost effective. These treatments will not have undergone rigorous clinical trials to demonstrate that they are effective. It is inappropriate to direct NHS resources towards products that have limited proven efficacy or safety in preference to medicines that have a more established evidence base.

1. **Treatments for Minor Ailments**

Many minor ailments are of short duration, have no long term health implications and can be often be self-managed by the individual. Products aimed at treating the symptoms of many of these ailments may not offer value for money and should not be prescribed. Other minor ailments are treated with products available without prescription. These products can be bought from a Community Pharmacy or supermarket if required.

Table 1: List of Minor Ailments & Available Treatments

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Minor Ailment Condition** | **Treatment** | **Other brands to be aware of (N.B. this is not an exhaustive list)** | **Exceptions** |
| **Acute pain, headache, temperature** | Paracetamol 500mg tablets | Anadin; Mandanol; Disprol; Panadol; Hedex; Panadol Advance | Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief. |
| Paracetamol 500mg caplets |
| Paracetamol 500mg capsules |
| Paracetamol 500mg soluble tablets |
| Ibuprofen 200mg tablets | Anadin Ibuprofen; Mandafen; Anadin Joint Pain; Manorfen; Anadin Liquifast; Nurofen; Calprofen; Orbifen; Cuprofen; Phor Pain; Hedex |
| Ibuprofen 200mg caplets |
| Ibuprofen 200mg liquid capsules |
| Ibuprofen 400mg tablets |
| Ibuprofen 100mg/5ml suspension S/F |
| Co-codamol 8/500mg tablets | Migraleve Yellow; Paracodol |
| Co-codamol 8/500mg capsules |
| Co-codamol 8/500mg dispersible tablets |
| Co-codamol 8/500mg effervescent tablets |
| Paracetamol 120mg/5ml suspension S/F | Calpol Infant; Calpol Six Plus; Mandanol; Medinol; Sootheze Six Plus | Children under 2 months. Babies born before 37 weeks.Babies weighing less than 4kg. |
| Paracetamol 250mg/5ml suspension S/F |
| **Athletes foot** | Miconazole 2% cream | Daktarin | Diabetic patients. Pregnancy.Breastfeeding. |
| Lamisil Once 1% Cutaneous | Lamisil AT; | Children under 18 |
|  | Solution | Scholl Advanced | years. Diabetic patients. Pregnancy. Breast feeding. |
| **Bites / stings** | Hydrocortisone 1% cream | HC45;Lanacort | Children under 10 years. Pregnancy. Eyes or face, ano-genital area or on broken or infected skin. Long term skin conditions requiring regular treatment. |
| Chlorphenamine 4mg tablets | Allercalm; Piriton; Hayleve; Pollenase; Piriton Allergy | Children under 12 years. Pregnancy. Breast feeding. |
| Chlorphenamine 2mg/5ml solution S/F | Allerief; Piriton | Children under 1 year. Children with asthma. Children taking monoamine oxidase inhibitors. |
| Chlorphenamine 2mg/5ml solution |
| Loratidine 10mg tablets | Clarityn Allergy; Clarityn Rapide | Children under 2 years. Children 2-12 years weighing less than 30kg. Pregnancy.Breast feeding. |
| **Cold sores** | Aciclovir 5% cream | Cymex Ultra; Virasorb; Lypsyl; Zovirax | Immunocompromised & terminally ill. Children under 12-years. |
| **Conjunctivitis (uncomplicated)** | Chloramphenicol 0.5% eye drops | Brochlor; Golden Eye; Optrex Infected Eye; Lumicare; Tubilux | Children under 2 years. Pregnancy.Breastfeeding. |
| Chloramphenicol 1% eye ointment |
| **Diarrhoea** | Dioralyte sachets | Dioralyte Relief | Patients with liver or kidney disease. Patients on low potassium or sodium diets. Patients with diabetes. |
| Electrolade sachets |
| Loperamide 2mg capsules | Diah-limit; Entrocalm; Imodium; Diaquitte; Norimode; Diocalm Ultra; Normaloe | Children under 12 years. Inflammatory bowel disease. Post bowel surgery. Post pelvic radiation.Colorectal cancer. |
| **Ear wax** | Olive/Almond Oil/ Arachis oil | Almond Oil; | None |
|  | based products Sodium BicarbonateUrea hydrogen peroxide | Cerumol; EarCalm; Waxsol; Molcer; Otex; Exterol; Sodium Bicarbonate |  |
|  | Acrivastine 8mg caps | Benadryl Allergy Relief; Benadryl Plus | Children under 12 years. Adults over 65 years. Pregnancy Breastfeeding.Significant renal disease. |
| **Hay fever** | Beclomethasone nasal spray | Beconase Hayfever; Nasobec; Pollenase; Vivabec | Children under 18 years. |
|  | Cetirizine 10mg tablets | Benadryl; Piriteze; Histease; Zirtek; Pollenshield | Children under 12 years. Patients with kidney problems.Pregnancy. Breast feeding. |
|  | Cetirizine1mg/ml oral solution | Benadryl Allergy Relief; Zirtek Allergy |
| NB: Exclusions for antihistamines have been standardised to age 12 years to avoid confusion related to the varying licenses for the different over the counter products. | Chlorphenamine 4mg tablets | Allercalm; Piriton; Hayleve; Pollenase; Piriton Allergy | Children under 12 years. Pregnancy. Breast feeding. |
| Chlorphenamine 2mg/5ml oral solution S/F | Allerief; Piriton | Children under 12 years. Children with Asthma. |
| Chlophenamine 2mg/5ml oral solution |
| Loratidine 10mg tablets | Clarityn Rapide; Clarityn Allergy | Children under 2 years. Children 2-12 years weighing less than 30kg. Pregnancy.Breast feeding. |
| Loratidine 5mg/5ml syrup | Clarityn Allergy |
| Sodium Cromoglycate 2% Eye Drops | Allercrom; Optrex Allergy; Catacrom Allergy Relief; Pollenase; Cromolux Hayfever; Opticrom | None |
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|  |  | Hayfever |  |
| **Head lice** | Malathion 0.5% Aqueous Lotion | Derbac-M |  |
| Dimethicone 4% Lotion | Hedrin; Linicin; Lyclear; Nitrid; Nyda |
| **Occasional Indigestion, heartburn, upset stomach** | Gaviscon Advance tablets | Gaviscon 250;Gaviscon Cool; Gaviscon Double Action | Children under 16 years. |
| Gaviscon Advance liquid |
| Ranitidine 75mg tablets | Zantac; Gavilast; Ranicalm | Children under 16 years. |
| **Infant colic** | Infacol Susp, Colief, gripe water | Dentinox | Colief®: if ACBS criteria are confirmed - for the relief of symptoms associated with lactose intolerance in infants, provided this is confirmed by the presence of reducing substances and/or excessive acid in stools, a low concentration of the corresponding disaccharide enzyme on intestinal biopsy or by breath hydrogen test or lactose intolerance test. Infacol and gripe water: none foreseen |
| **Nappy rash** | Metanium | Bepanthen; Drapolene; Morhulin; Zinc & Castor Oil | None |
| Sudocrem |
| **Nasal congestion** | Sodium Chloride 0.9% nasal drops | Snufflebabe; Calpol Soothe & Care; Mandanol | None |
| Sodium Chloride 0.9% nasal spray |
| Chlorphenamine 2mg/5ml oral solution S/F |
| **Oral Thrush** | Miconazole Oral Gel | Daktarin Oral Gel | Babies under 4 months, use in Palliative Care |
| **Teething** | Bonjela Teething Gel | Anbesol; Calgel; Dentinox | Babies under 2 months. Heart disease. Liver disease. |
| Paracetamol 120mg/5ml suspension S/F | Calpol Infant; Mandanol Infant; Medinol | Babies under 2 months. Babies born before 37 weeks. Babies weighing less than 4kg. |
| **Threadworms** | Mebendazole 100mg tablets | Ovex | Under 2 years. Pregnancy. Breast feeding. |
| Pripsen Sachets |
| **Vaginal thrush** | Clotrimazole 1% cream | Canestan | Pregnancy. Breast feeding. Children under16. Adults over 60. Recurrent thrush |
| Clotrimazole 500mg pessary |
| Fluconazole 150mg capsule | Canestan; Diflucan |
| **Warts & Verrucae** | Bazuka Extra Strength Gel | Veracur; Verrugon | Sexual Health and GUM, Diabetic patients |
| Salactol Wart Paint | Cuplex; Duofilm; | Sexual Health and GUM, Diabetic patients |
|  | Occlusal; Salatac |  |

1. **Treatments Where There is Insufficient Evidence of Clinical Benefit or Cost- Effectiveness**

Many of the products in this category (listed in Table 2) are not supported by a clinical trial programme to show efficacy. This means that they have not undergone stringent clinical trial programmes laid down by the regulatory authorities to confirm their safety, and efficacy and there is no summary of product characteristics (SPC) for prescribers to consult.

Many of these products are classed as either ‘food substitutes’ or are not covered by ACBS1 regulations and/or do not appear in the current British National Formulary (BNF) or the Drug Tariff. They are often not manufactured to the same high pharmaceutical standards used for licensed medicines; hence there is no guarantee of consistency in formulation and potency. These treatments will not have undergone rigorous clinical trials to demonstrate that they are effective. It is inappropriate to direct NHS resources towards products that do not have proven efficacy or safety in preference to licensed medicines.

Table 2: May be Insufficient Evidence of Clinical Benefit or Cost Effectiveness

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Examples (N.B. this is not an exhaustive list)** | **Exceptions** |
| **Antiperspirants** | Driclor, Odaban, Anhydrol Forte | None |
| **Antifungal nail paint** | Amorolfine nail lacquer, Curanail, Loceryl, Salicylic acid compound paint (Phytex), Tiocanazole cutaneous solution (Trosyl) | Not for cosmetic treatment. Oral treatment is more appropriate.Immunocompromised, PVD, diabetics, nail painful or awaiting surgery on affected limb/s |
| **Cough** | Codeine linctus; pholcodine linctus, simple linctus | Cough mixtures for terminally ill patients on the advice of specialists |
| **Eye care** | Blephaclean eye lid wipe; Lid-care eye lid wipe; Optrex; Supranettes; Refresh unit-dose ophthalmic solution; sterile eye cleaning wipes | None |
| **Health supplements** | Products containing glucosamine; products containing chondroitin; products containing fish oils; products containing co-enzyme q10; products containing omega-7; Icaps; Ocuvite; Preservision; Natures own; Natures aid | None |
| **Herbal remedies** | St John's Wort; Kalms; Nytol; Bach flower remedies | None |
| **Homeopathic remedies** | Weleda products; Nelson products | None |
| **Nasal congestion** | Menthol & eucalyptus inhalation; Xylometazoline nasal products; Otradrops; Otrivine products; Sudafed products; Galpseud products; Pseudoephedrine products | None |
| **Probiotics** | VSL#3 | Pouchitis |
| **Rubefacients** | Algesal; Balmosa; Deep freeze; Mentholatum; Radian B | None |
| **Sore throat** | AAA sore throat spray; Difflam products; Covonia products; Deqadin; Ultra chloraseptic; Dequaspray; Tyrozets; Merocaine; Strepsils products; Merocets; Bradasol | Use in Palliative Care: Chlorhexidine gluconate mouth Wash, Benzydamine mouthwash & spray |
| **Specialist Infant Formula Feeds** | Nutriprem 2, Nutramigen Lipil, Aptamil Pepti, Pepti Junior, Althera, Similac Alimentum, Neocate LCP, Nutramigen AA, Alfamino, SMA LF, Enfamil O-Lac, Aptamil lactose free | Prescribing that is in line with the Lancashire Medicines Management Group guideline for prescribing of Specialist Infant Formula Feeds. [http://www.lancsmmg.nh](http://www.lancsmmg.nhs.uk/download/guidelines/Specialist%20Infant%20Formula%20Feeds%20Prescribing%20Guide%20%28Version%202.1%29.pdf) [s.uk/download/guidelines](http://www.lancsmmg.nhs.uk/download/guidelines/Specialist%20Infant%20Formula%20Feeds%20Prescribing%20Guide%20%28Version%202.1%29.pdf)[/Specialist%20Infant%20](http://www.lancsmmg.nhs.uk/download/guidelines/Specialist%20Infant%20Formula%20Feeds%20Prescribing%20Guide%20%28Version%202.1%29.pdf) [Formula%20Feeds%20P](http://www.lancsmmg.nhs.uk/download/guidelines/Specialist%20Infant%20Formula%20Feeds%20Prescribing%20Guide%20%28Version%202.1%29.pdf) [rescribing%20Guide%20(](http://www.lancsmmg.nhs.uk/download/guidelines/Specialist%20Infant%20Formula%20Feeds%20Prescribing%20Guide%20%28Version%202.1%29.pdf) [Version%202.1).pdf](http://www.lancsmmg.nhs.uk/download/guidelines/Specialist%20Infant%20Formula%20Feeds%20Prescribing%20Guide%20%28Version%202.1%29.pdf) |
| **Vitamins, multivitamin & all mineral preparations** | Pharmacy own brands (Boots, Lloyds, Superdrug, Valupack) of vitamins / multivitamins; Haliborange; Sanatogen; Fruitivits; Spatone; Seven Seas; Vita-E; Osteocaps vega; Osteocare premier; Redoxon; Centrum; Eye-Q; Natravits, Icaps, Ocuvite products, Preservision products, Visionace, Vitalux-plus | High dose vitamin D for proven vitamin D deficiency; Thiamine for alcohol related conditions & neurological complications; Vitamin B12 deficiency; Vitamin supplements for premature babies as advised by Hospital |

1. **Preparations Where There May Not be a Clinical Need to Treat**

Within this category there are treatments (listed in Table 3) that are clinically and cost effective when used in some patients, but not when used more widely. Also, some treatments are clinically effective but are not considered to be a good use of NHS resources. If prescribing is deemed to be clinically necessary, only those products listed in the East Lancashire Health Economy formulary should be prescribed ([www.elmmb.nhs.uk](http://www.elmmb.nhs.uk))

Prescribers will be required to consider whether the benefit of prescribing a treatment for an individual justifies the expense to the NHS.

Table 3: May Not be a Clinical Need to Treat

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Examples (N.B. this is not an exhaustive list)** | **Exceptions** |
| **Acne (mild)** | Aluminium oxide 38.09% paste (including Bavisol paste No1); all Benzoyl peroxide products (including Panoxyl, Brevoxyl, Oxy, Acnecide); Nicotinamide 4% gel (including Freederm, Nicam, Quinoderm) | Moderate to severe cases where OTC products have failed (follow antibiotic guidelines) |
| **Dandruff (including cradle cap)** | Alphosyl 2-in-1 shampoo; Capasal shampoo; Ceanel concentrate shampoo; Psoriderm scalp lotion; T/Gel shampoo | Psoriasis |
| Bezalkonium chloride 0.5% shampoo (including Dermax); E45 dry scalp shampoo; Ketoconazole 2% shampoo(including Dandrazol, Ketopine, Nizoral); Selsun | None  |
| Dentinox cradle cap treatment shampoo (follow BNF advice: 'cradle cap in infants may be treated with coconut oil or olive oil applications followed by shampooing') | None |
| **Dental & sore mouth products** | Duraphat fluoride toothpaste (to be prescribed by Dentist) | Use in Palliative Care: Chlorhexidine gluconate mouthwash; Benzydamine mouthwash & spray |
| Sodium fluoride mouthwash, oral drops, tablets and toothpaste (including Colgate, En- de-Kay, Fluor-a-day, Fluorigard) |
| Oraldene mouthwash |
| Hydrogen peroxide 6% mouthwash; Peroxyl 1.5% mouthwash |
| Benzydamine hydrochloride mouthwash & spray (including Difflam, Oroeze) |
| Chlorhexidine gluconate mouthwash, oral spray & dental gel (including Corsodyl) |
| Anbesol gel & liquid; Bonjela products; Iglu gel; Rinstead pastilles | Use in Palliative Care: Bonjela gel |
| **Emollients & bath / shower products** | Aveeno products; Dermacool products; Dermalo bath emollient; Dermamist spray; Diprobath emollient; Eucerin products; Neutrogena products; Balneum products; Dermol 200 shower emollient; Dermol wash; Doublebase products; E45 products; Hydromol products; Oilatum products | Emollients only to be prescribed for patients with a confirmed diagnosis of a significant skin disease (including eczema and psoriasis); Patients discharged from a Specialist Centre on a particular product should be maintained on the same product, if effective |
| **Skin products** | Bio-oil skin care oil; Coconut oil; products containing Dexpanthenol (Bepanthen, Nivea SOS); Flexitol products; E45 foot & heel cream; Glucosamine gel; Senset Skin cleansing foam; Skin Salvation ointment; Vitamin E cream | Foot products used in the treatment of diabetes |
| **Sunscreens** | Ambre Solaire products; Anthelios products; Delp products; Riemann P20 products; Sunsense products; Uvistat products | Only to be prescribed within ACBS criteria: protection against UV radiation in abnormal cutaneous photosensitivity, resulting from genetic disorders or photodermatoses, including vitiligo and those resulting from radiotherapy; chronic or recurrent herpes simplex labialis |

**Prescribing of ‘self-care’ products: FAQs**

**What changes have been made in relation to the prescribing of self-care products?**

The NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in East Lancashire support GP practices in promoting self-care.

Self-care is a term used to include all the actions taken by people to recognise, treat, protect their own health, choosing choose appropriate treatments to manage illnesses and/or long term conditions.

Unless a patient meets a particular exemption, the CCG has decided to stop funding prescriptions for a range of products that are classed as ‘low priority’.

This will be because they are readily available over the counter in pharmacies and on the shelves in supermarkets, and include:

* 1. Treatments for minor ailments, including medicines like paracetamol, ibuprofen, head lice lotion and indigestion tablets.
	2. Treatments where there is little evidence that they have a real clinical benefit, including cough syrups, nasal congestion sprays, sore throat products and vitamin supplements.

To make sure that NHS resources are used wisely, it has been agreed that only those treatments that are clinically effective and provide a clear health benefit to patients should be prescribed on NHS prescriptions.

**Why have the changes been made to stop prescribing these products?**

For some of the products there is not much clinical evidence that they are effective in treating minor illnesses or their symptoms, and for all of the products they are readily available in shops and supermarkets.

As a local clinical commissioning group, we have a responsibility to use public resources in an efficient way, that is ‘value for money’ for the tax payer, and it is expected that the local NHS will be able to save around £500,000 a year by making these changes.

**I have a long term condition and because of that I experience on-going chronic pain. How will I get the amount of pain medication I need when there are restrictions for over the counter purchasing?**

Your GP will still be able to prescribe you those products because of your long term condition and pain management needs.

**Which patients will be ‘exempt’ and will still be able to receive these types of products on prescriptions?**

Your GP will use the policy to determine if you are exempt or not. The exemptions depend on the individual product or type of medication, but there are some exemptions for the following people:

* People with long term conditions and pain management needs
* Babies
* Children
* Pregnant women
* Breastfeeding mothers
* Patients being care for at the end of their life

**What is the full list of the types of products that will not routinely be prescribed going forward?**

* Pain killers for acute minor aches and pains, including migraine
* Management of coughs and colds, blocked nose, sore throat, including decongestants, nasal drops and inhalations
* Treatments for non-serious diarrhoea
* Antihistamines and allergy preparations for non-serious stings and insect bites
* Treatment of head lice infestation using head lice lotions and shampoos
* Treatments of occasional indigestion and heartburn, including that resulting from over-indulgence
* Treatments for oral or vaginal thrush
* Antiperspirants for excess sweating
* Athlete’s foot creams and powders
* Barrier creams and treatments for non-infected, unbroken nappy rash
* Creams for the removal of female facial hair
* Cream and gels for mild acne
* Ear wax removers and softeners
* Soya based formula milks
* Hay fever preparations, including eye drops for allergies
* Lozenges, throat sprays, mouthwashes and gargles, including treatments for mouth ulcers
* Moisturisers and bath additives for minor dry skin conditions
* Treatments for skin rashes, including mild-moderate eczema
* Treatments for threadworm
* Tonics, vitamins and minerals supplements, herbal and complementary remedies
* Antifungal nail paint
* Cold sore treatments
* Treatments for eye infections, including uncomplicated conjunctivitis
* Sun creams / lotions
* Teething gels
* Treatments for infant colic
* Fluoride toothpastes
* Warts and verrucae treatments

**What if I don’t currently pay for prescriptions and can’t afford this change?**

Most of the products are available readily at a reasonable price, particularly if they are pharmacy and supermarket ‘own brand’ versions of the products.

**Where can I get the listed medications from if not from my GP?**

Many of the medications are available from the high street or from supermarkets. Pain killers can be bought from as little as 20 pence and other medications can be bought for less than the cost of a prescription.

**I have purchased a prescription pre-payment certificate specifically for one or more of these self-care products – can I get a refund?**

Your local CCG will reimburse prescription prepayment certificates where these have been purchased by patients for the sole purpose of obtaining one or more self-care product on prescription. If this is the case, please contact the customer care team on freephone 0800 032 2424.

**Where can I get advice or support about self-care and appropriate medicines?**

You can find a wealth of information about self-care on the NHS Choices website. Visit the site and search ‘live well’ or ‘self-care’: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk/).

You should also make the most of your local pharmacist, who will be very knowledgeable about ways to treat your minor illness or symptoms. You do not need to make an appointment to speak to your pharmacist. Many pharmacies are open in the evenings and at weekends. Any consultation you have with the pharmacist will be confidential and discrete, in a private area of the pharmacy.