

Phase two self-care consultation outcome - What should we prescribe in Warrington?

Background

We've recently reviewed more medicines that should be bought over-the-counter rather than being routinely prescribed. The first phase took place in 2015 and was implemented in 2016.

After a formal public consultation for phase two in 2017, it has been agreed that patients will be expected to buy the medicines listed in appendix A over-the-counter at a local pharmacy or supermarket.

This means that from **Monday 29th January 2018** health professionals in Warrington will no longer prescribe additional medications for short term **minor** health problems, unless there is a specialist clinical need or for certain other exemptions.

Medicines involved in phase two of the consultation were broken down into three categories:

- Medicines and treatments that are available to purchase over-the-counter, used for the treatment of minor, short-term medical conditions
- Medicines and treatments where there is limited evidence of clinical benefit or cost-effectiveness
- Medicines and treatments that are prescribed to treat conditions where there is no clinical need for treatment

Outcome

The outcome of the consultation, that ended on Friday 15th December 2017, saw on average 75% of people who took part support the CCG in its belief that the medicines involved in phase two of the self-care consultation should be bought over-the-counter, rather than being routinely prescribed by a healthcare professional.

The CCG's Governing Body, which includes public lay members and GP leads received the consultation outcome report on Wednesday 10th January 2018 and agreed with the recommendations, therefore from **Monday 29th January 2018**, unless there are exceptional circumstances, these medicines will **no longer routinely be prescribed** for short term, minor conditions and patients will be

expected to buy these over-the-counter. Patients are advised to speak to their local pharmacist for advice and guidance.

Some medicines are only available over-the-counter in certain circumstances. For example, some medicines are not suitable for very young children. Where this is the case a healthcare professional will be able to prescribe these medicines.

These medications will still be available if a patient needs them for a long term condition or needs a higher dose/strength than is available over-the-counter.

Why?

This decision has been taken because each year, we spend over £1million on prescribing medicines that patients can buy over-the-counter for minor, short term health problems.

We feel this is money that could, and should, be spent on other vital treatments for local people and make better use of our precious NHS resources.

For example, did you know that:

- Last year, we spent over £8,000 on dandruff and cradle cap treatments
- Each GP consultation costs on average £36 and prescription costs are an additional £27 per consultation
- We could save over £5,000 per month by not prescribing tablets for hayfever

Appendix A

Self-care medicines for patients in Warrington

The medicines in phase two now join the medicines outlined in phase one's consultation, meaning that unless there is an exceptional circumstance or a patient has a long term condition patients will need to buy these medicines over-the-counter:

- Pain killers for **minor** aches and pains
- Tonics, vitamins and health supplements
- Ear wax removers
- Lozenges, throat sprays, mouthwashes, gargles and toothpastes
- Indigestion remedies for occasional use
- Creams for bruising, tattoos, and scars
- Hair removal creams
- Moisturisers and bath additives for dry skin
- Sun creams
- Foods and food supplements

Please store medicines in a safe place, out of the reach of children and always check the expiry date of medicines before use. Please return all out of date medications to your local pharmacist.

- Pain relief cream/ointment for short-term use
- Oral antihistamines for hay fever
- Decongestant nasal sprays and tablets
- Teething gels and mouth ulcer treatments
- Vaginal moisturisers (for example lubricant gels and creams)
- Warts and verrucae paints
- Heparinoid gel/cream
- Antiperspirants
- Antifungal treatments (for example for athletes foot)
- Treatments for bites and stings
- Treatments for cold sores
- Antibacterial eye drops
- Treatment for diarrhoea
- Head lice treatments
- Treatments for infant colic
- Creams/ointments for nappy rash
- Threadworm treatments
- Treatments for vaginal thrush
- Haemorrhoids treatment
- Cough preparations
- Eye care products (for example blepharitis wipes)
- Probiotics
- Treatments for mild acne
- Dandruff and cradle cap treatments
- Baby milks (unless a clinical need for a specialist milk)

What should patients do if they have a concern?

They can contact the CCG's Patient Experience Team on (Freephone) 0800 389 6973 or on 01925 843 743.

They can also contact the Patient Experience Team in writing by
 NHS Warrington Clinical Commissioning Group
 Arpley House
 110 Birchwood Boulevard
 Birchwood

Please store medicines in a safe place, out of the reach of children and always check the expiry date of medicines before use. Please return all out of date medications to your local pharmacist.

Warrington
WA3 7QH

Or they can email complaints.nhswarringtonccg@nhs.net

What communications have been put in place to support this?

Self-care factsheets about certain medicines highlighted in phase one and phase two has been created for use. These fact sheets are available on the CCG's website by [clicking here](#) or visiting: www.warringtonccg.nhs.uk/Page%20images/get-involved/phase-two-self-care-medicines-outcome.htm

For further information, about how you can be prepared to self-care at home for minor ailments, please visit: www.warringtonccg.nhs.uk/Page%20images/your-health/adult-self-care.htm