

IWCCG Guidance on Prescribing of OTC Medications

The Isle of Wight CCG has been actively implementing NHS England Guidance developed in view of general public support for the need to reduce the financial and workload burden of General Practice prescribing OTC items.

For instance, 12 tablet pack of anti-sickness tablets: *OTC Cost £2.18* Vs *GP prescription estimated cost £35*

IOW OTC drug expenditure on OTC medicines is £1.6m (not including associated costs of prescribing and dispensing).

We do not expect to eliminate all prescribing of OTC items, but all costs saved can be reinvested locally in the care of your patients, in addition to the time/burden on resources saved.

The Medications Optimisation Team will support any changes in your OTC prescribing you decide to make by: MOT/POD review of your practice’s prescribing, Keele data monitoring (QPSS), your practice’s MOT technician addressing specific instances of prescribing of OTC items, with letters to patients who have their medications stopped, and poster and other media coverage to alert patients to the expectation of their prescriptions being changed.

NHS England position on prescribing OTC items:

When not to prescribe (FP10):

- Limited evidence of clinical effectiveness
- Condition is self-limiting
- Self-care is appropriate

When to prescribe (FP10):

- Product license excludes OTC sale to certain groups
- Self-care condition has failed to respond to OTC treatment
- Symptom is not minor or not due to minor ailment
- Patient’s ability to self-manage compromised (vulnerable groups e.g. LD)

Remember, if you should make a decision not to prescribe an OTC item in contravention of the advice above, there may be cause for patient-complaint.



When not prescribing, patients may be directed to ‘Pharmacy First’ and information available from other organisations regarding their self-care: e.g. Self-Care Forum (<http://www.selfcareforum.org/>) and NHS Choices (<https://www.nhs.uk/>)

The full NHS England document

“Conditions for which over the counter items (OTC) should not routinely be prescribed in primary care”
is available at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf>