

Appendix 1– Consultation Document and Survey

Proposals to stop prescribing medicines for minor conditions

NHS Blackburn with Darwen Clinical Commissioning Group continuously reviews the services it commissions or “buys” to ensure that the local health budget is spent as effectively as possible, whilst minimising waste and promoting self-care.

The CCG is proposing to stop prescribing treatments and medicines for short-term, minor conditions or where there is insufficient evidence that they improve symptoms or where they aren't value for money.

Many of these medicines are now widely available over the counter (in pharmacies or shops) at a low cost price or cheaper than an NHS prescription. Many are prescribed for conditions that have no clinical need of treatment.

The CCG wants to encourage people to “self-care” — which means that people take more responsibility for their own health and wellbeing where they can. For instance pharmacies are a good source of advice and support and can release GP time to treat people with more serious conditions.

The CCG wants its limited medicines budget to be used for the treatment of more serious conditions. It currently spends **£663,042** a year on prescriptions for items that are available over the counter for self-care and wants your views on its proposals to stop these prescriptions in the future.

Why are we proposing to stop prescribing medicines for minor conditions?

Self-care is when people manage simple, short-term conditions themselves, e.g. sore throats and colds. This is widely acknowledged as an important solution to help keep the NHS sustainable. Nationally there are 57 million GP consultations each year for minor conditions and this costs the NHS approximately £2 billion and takes up to an hour a day on average for every GP.

Removing medicines for short-term, minor ailments from routine prescription would free up GP time to treat patients with more urgent or serious medical problems. Most minor ailments are generally not of a serious nature and can usually be effectively managed by the individual, parents or carers.

Products aimed at treating the symptoms of many of these ailments may not offer value for money and should not normally be prescribed at NHS expense — simple medications are prescribed at an inflated cost to the NHS and take up clinical and patient time.

Often these products are widely available at low cost from supermarkets and pharmacies. Pharmacists (and other trained staff) are experts in providing advice around minor ailments; they are easy to access without an appointment.

Conditions where there is no clinical need of treatment

Conditions such as a common cold, sore throat or minor cough are ones that would naturally get better themselves in the majority of patients if untreated, and so products to help soothe these conditions (e.g. cough mixtures, sore throat lozenges) will no longer be prescribed. Treatments for minor ailments, such as vaginal thrush, can be treated with medicines from the pharmacy, and so will also be removed from prescriptions.

Products where there is insufficient evidence of clinical benefit or cost effectiveness

Some products that we currently prescribe are clinically ineffective or are not cost effective. These treatments will not have undergone rigorous clinical trials to demonstrate that they work. We believe that it is inappropriate to spend our local NHS budget on products that do not have proven efficacy or safety in preference to medicines supported by robust clinical evidence.

NHS Blackburn with Darwen CCG already has policies in place to limit the prescribing of some of these products, (e.g. glucosamine supplements, vitamin products specifically for eye health, and homeopathic remedies). Further policies will be developed as other products with limited evidence to support them are identified.

Examples of 'over the counter' items which we are proposing to remove from prescription as are shown in the list below (this is not an exhaustive list) and details of what we spent on prescribing these items in 2015/16.

Category Spend

- Simple pain relief £232,336
- Antihistamine tablets, capsules, liquids and sprays £71,664
- Antifungal nail £8,684
- Athletes Foot £5,503
- Health supplements £25,981
- Bites and Stings £34,382
- Conjunctivitis £8,900
- Dandruff – Cradle Cap £27,779
- Diarrhoea £33,268
- Indigestion/heartburn £74,469
- Sore throat £5,918
- Nasal decongestant £3,536
- Sunscreens £7,181
- Headlice £24,261
- Teething £6,110
- Warts and verruca treatments £1,492
- Antiperspirants £1,149
- Emollients £40,679
- Cough syrups £3,494
- Ear wax removers £5,367

Have your say

NHS Blackburn with Darwen CCG is undertaking consultation on the proposal so it can explore the issue in more detail and obtain feedback from patients and the public.

The consultation will run from Monday 30 January 2017 until Friday March 31 2017.

All residents of Blackburn with Darwen or those registered with a GP in the borough have the potential to be affected. After the period of consultation, all feedback will be used to produce a report with recommendations that will inform the CCG's decision in relation to implementing the proposals.

Getting Your Feedback

As part of the consultation we need your views on the proposals and to understand the impact they may have on you. To hear what you think about the proposals you have a variety of opportunities to give your feedback.

POST - You can fill in the survey below and post back to our address Blackburn with Darwen CCG, Fusion House, Haslingden Road, Blackburn, BB1 2FD.

ONLINE — by following the link to the electronic survey below: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MX3RRJZ>

EMAIL – send your completed surveys to communications@blackburnwithdarwenccg.nhs.uk

SELF-CARE CONSULTATION

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The CCG is proposing to stop prescribing treatments and medicines for short-term, minor conditions or where there is not enough evidence that they improve symptoms or where they aren't value for money.

Many of these medicines are now widely available over the counter (in pharmacies or shops) at a low cost price or cheaper than an NHS prescription.

It currently spends **£663,042** a year on prescriptions for items that are available over the counter for self-care and wants your views on its proposals to these prescriptions in the future.

Q1. Please state whether you agree with the proposal to stop prescribing the 'over the counter' treatments and medicines including those listed below.

	Yes	No	Unsure
Simple pain killers			
Antihistamine tablets, sprays, capsules and liquids			
Vitamins, minerals and health supplements			
Toothpastes, mouthwashes and mouth gels			
Sore throat products			
Nasal decongestant sprays, tablets and capsules			
Sun protection creams, lotions and sprays			
Warts, athletes foot, verruca and anti-fungal treatments			
Antiperspirants			
Cosmetic moisturisers and emollients			
Cough syrups, linctus and mixtures			
Ear wax removers			
Head lice treatment			
Diarrhoea treatment			
Indigestion and heartburn treatment			
Shampoo and cradle cap treatment			

Q2. Please add any comments about these proposals here

Q3. Do you currently pay for prescriptions? If not, why not?

Yes	No

Q4. If you are a representative of a group/organisation with an interest in these proposals, please give details.

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ABOUT YOU

Are you registered with a GP in BwD?

Yes	No
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First part of postcode eg BB1

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Age

17 or younger	
18 – 30 years	
31 – 50 years	
51 – 64 years	
65 or older	

Gender

Male	
Female	
Other (please specify)	
Prefer not to say	

Is your gender identity the same as the one on your original birth certificate?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual	
Gay male	
Lesbian / gay female	
Bisexual	
Other (please specify)	
Prefer not to say	

If you consider yourself to have a disability, please specify	
Learning disability	
Long term mental health condition	
Physical impairment – mobility	
Blind/sight impairment	
Deaf/hearing impairment	

If you consider yourself to have a long term condition, please specify	
Heart condition	
Diabetes	
COPD	
Chronic kidney disease	
Cancer	
Coeliac Disease	
Other (specify)	

Are you a carer?			
No		Yes	

Employment status	
Employed	
Unemployed	
Retired	
Student	

Religious belief	
Agnostic/atheist/no religion	
Buddhism	
Christianity	
Hinduism	
Humanism	
Islam	
Judaism	
Sikhism	
Prefer not to say	

Ethnicity	
Asian/Asian British – Bangladeshi	
Asian/Asian British – Indian	
Asian/Asian British – Pakistani	
Other Asian background	
Black/Black British – African	
Black/Black British – Caribbean	
Other Black background	

Chinese	
Mixed heritage – White/Asian	
Mixed heritage – White/Black African	
Mixed heritage – White/Black Caribbean	
White British	
White Irish	
White other	
Gypsy/Roma/Traveller	
Other ethnicity	
Prefer not to say	

Are you a member of BwD Citizen Panel?	
Yes	
No	
Would you like to join?	
<p>Please leave your details if you would like to be kept informed of outcome of this consultation or would like details of the Citizen Panel.</p>	

Please return to: NHS Blackburn with Darwen CCG, Fusion House, Evolution Park, Haslingden Rd, Blackburn BB1 2FD.