

Prescribing for Clinical Need Policy

Blackburn with Darwen 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

Blackburn with Darwen 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

Blackburn with Darwen 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, Blackburn with Darwen 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
	Paracetamol 500mg tablets Paracetamol 500mg caplets Paracetamol 500mg capsules Paracetamol 500mg soluble tablets	Anadin; Mandanol; Disprol; Panadol; Hedex; Panadol Advance	

Acute pain, headache, temperature	Ibuprofen 200mg tablets Ibuprofen 200mg caplets Ibuprofen 200mg liquid capsules Ibuprofen 400mg tablets	Anadin Ibuprofen; Mandafen; Anadin Joint Pain; Manorfen; Anadin Liquifast; Nurofen; Calprofen; Orbifen; Cuprofen; Phor Pain; Hedex	Long term conditions requiring regular pain relief.
	Ibuprofen 100mg/5ml suspension S/F		
	Co-codamol 8/500mg tablets Co-codamol 8/500mg capsules Co-codamol 8/500mg dispersible tablets Co-codamol 8/500mg effervescent tablets	Migraleve Yellow; Paracodol	
	Paracetamol 120mg/5ml suspension S/F Paracetamol 250mg/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.
Athletes foot	Miconazole 2% cream	Daktarin	Diabetic patients. Pregnancy. Breastfeeding.
	Lamisil Once 1% Cutaneous Solution	Lamisil AT;	Children under 18 years. Diabetic patients. Pregnancy. Breast feeding.
	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.
Bites / stings	Chlorphenamine 4mg tablets	Allercalm; Piriton; Hayleve; Pollenase; Piriton Allergy	Children under 12 years. Pregnancy. Breast feeding.

	Chlorphenamine 2mg/5ml solution S/F Chlorphenamine 2mg/5ml solution	Allerief; Piriton	Children under 1 year. Children with asthma. Children taking monoamine oxidase inhibitors.
	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 Chloramphenicol 1% eye ointment	Brochlor; Golden Eye; Optrex Infected Eye; Lumicare; Tubilux	Children under 2 years. Pregnancy. Breastfeeding.
Diarrhoea	Dioralyte sachets Electrolade sachets	Dioralyte Relief	Patients with liver or kidney disease. Patients on low potassium or sodium diets. Patients with diabetes.
	Loperamide 2mg capsules	Diah-limit; Entrocalm; Imodium; Diaquite; 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 based products Sodium Bicarbonate Urea hydrogen peroxide	Almond Oil; Cerumol; EarCalm; Waxsol; Molcer; Otex; Exterol; Sodium Bicarbonate	None
	Acrivastine 8mg caps	Benadryl Allergy Relief; Benadryl Plus	Children under 12 years. Adults over 65 years. Pregnancy Breastfeeding. Significant renal disease.

<p>Hay fever</p> <p>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.</p>	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.
	Cetirizine 1mg/ml oral solution	Benadryl Allergy Relief; Zirtek Allergy	
	Chlorphenamine 4mg tablets	Allercalm; Piriton; Hayleve; Pollenase; Piriton Allergy	Children under 12 years. Pregnancy. Breast feeding.
	Chlorphenamine 2mg/5ml oral solution S/F Chlophenamine 2mg/5ml oral solution	Allerief; Piriton	Children under 12 years. Children with Asthma.
	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

		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 Sudocrem	Bepanthen; Drapolene; Morhulin; Zinc & Castor Oil	None
Nasal congestion	Sodium Chloride 0.9% nasal drops	Snufflebabe; Calpol Soothe & Care; Mandalol	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 Pripsen Sachets	Ovex	Under 2 years. Pregnancy. Breast feeding.
Vaginal thrush	Clotrimazole 1% cream Clotrimazole 500mg pessary	Canestan	Pregnancy. Breast feeding. Children under 16. Adults over 60. Recurrent thrush
	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	

2. 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, Benzylamine 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.lancsmmq.nhs.uk/download/guidelines/Specialist%20Infant%20Formula%20Feeds%20Prescribing%20Guide%20(V%20202.1).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, Ocuville 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
--	--	--

3. 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)

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 Freederam, 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	Duraphat fluoride toothpaste (to be prescribed by Dentist)	Use in Palliative Care: Chlorhexidine gluconate mouthwash; Benzydamine
	Sodium fluoride mouthwash, oral drops, tablets and toothpaste (including Colgate, En- de-Kay, Fluor-a-day, Fluorigard)	
	Oraldene mouthwash	

mouth products	Hydrogen peroxide 6% mouthwash; Peroxyl 1.5% mouthwash	mouthwash & spray
	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; Dermal bath emollient; Dermamist spray; Diprobath emollient; Eucerin products; Neutrogena products; Balneum products; Dermal 200 shower emollient; Dermal 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; Sensense 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