

15<sup>th</sup> June 2018

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Dear Community Pharmacy teams

**Self-care and OTC (over the counter) resources**

Following on from the recently issued national guidance, “Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs”<sup>1</sup>, I am delighted to enclose the first set of locally produced resources to support implementation of the national work stream. Further resources will be issued during the upcoming months to cover other areas included in the guidance.

Locally, the plan is to focus on hay fever over the summer months, and move to pain and dry skin in the autumn. Community pharmacy features heavily in our campaign; people are encouraged to utilise their local pharmacy for advice for minor conditions. We are also working with the LPC and GP colleagues, and all local community pharmacists will be invited to attend a “peer review” session with their local practice(s) in the autumn, where we will explore the benefits of self-care for the individual, the pharmacy, the GP and the wider NHS as well as the potential implementation challenges; we will also look at some case histories and consider the OTC licensing issues.

We would like to ask for your support with the following

- Displaying and using the enclosed posters and leaflets as appropriate for your pharmacy
- Avoid referring any person to their GP for the sole purpose of obtaining a prescription for an item available OTC. It may be worth bearing in mind that people who don't pay for their prescriptions are not exempt from self-care, and it would be really beneficial if you could ensure that all staff, including counter staff, are aware of the guidance.
- Consider stocking cost effective medicines for self-care e.g. generic antihistamines to help increase affordability for more people

Many thanks for your support with this national initiative and don't hesitate to get in touch (using the email or phone number above) with any questions or comments.

With best wishes,

Your local CCG Medicines Management team

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