

## Commissioning Statement for **THE PRESCRIBING OF HERBAL TREATMENTS**

Publication Date: July 2023

**Prescribing of Herbal treatments on FP10 prescriptions within Norfolk and Waveney ICS is recommended as**

**BLACK : NOT COMMISSIONED. NO NHS PRESCRIBING IN NORFOLK AND WAVENEY ICS**

### Background

**Norfolk and Waveney ICB do not support the prescribing of herbal treatments due to low clinical effectiveness. This position is supported by NHS England guidance on items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care.**

In the UK, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) allows herbal products to be marketed for minor health conditions that do not need to be treated by a doctor if they have a 'traditional herbal registration'.

Herbal treatments do not have a full medicines licence from the MHRA which means that they may not have been tested to ensure that they are efficacious, safe and that they are manufactured to high standards.

Some herbal treatments may also cause side effects and may interfere with how other medicines work.

This position is supported by NHS England as part of conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care.

### Recommendations

- Herbal treatments should not be initiated or prescribed for any new patient.
- All patients prescribed herbal treatments should be reviewed, with a view to discontinuing prescribing, and advised that they can be purchased over the counter from pharmacies or in health shops.
- Check if patients are taking any herbal treatments for interactions and/or unwanted effects.
- Note: the use of herbal treatments could delay accurate diagnosis of an underlying pathology.

Details of locally agreed formulary can be found in [Netformulary](#)

### Rationale:

- There is no requirement to prove scientifically that a product is efficacious under a Traditional Herbal Registration; the registration is based on the product having been used as a traditional medicine for a long time and not that the herbal treatment is efficacious
- Herbal treatments are classed as a product of low clinical effectiveness, because of a lack of robust evidence of clinical efficacy or because there are significant safety concerns.

## Prescribing information

Providers commissioned to provide services on behalf of Norfolk and Waveney ICB are reminded that they are required to follow the local joint formulary and prescribing guidance, as detailed in the medicines management service specification of their contract.

## Monitoring of Prescribing

Data on the use of these treatments will be supplied monthly as part of your data pack. If you have any queries, please email [nwicb.medsqueries@nhs.net](mailto:nwicb.medsqueries@nhs.net) with 'service restriction policy' in the subject line.

## References

\*Adapted from Mid & South East Essex document

<b>Title</b>	Commissioning Statement for Herbal Treatment Prescribing in Norfolk and Waveney ICS
<b>Description of policy</b>	<i>To inform healthcare professionals</i>
<b>Scope</b>	<i>Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System</i>
<b>Prepared by</b>	Norfolk and Waveney ICB Medicines Optimisation Team
<b>Impact Assessment</b> (Equalities and Environmental)	<p><i>Please indicate impact assessment outcome:</i></p> <p><i>Positive impact</i></p> <p><i>Adverse impact - low - action plan completed as per guidance</i></p> <p><i>Adverse impact - medium - action plan completed as per guidance</i></p> <p><i>Adverse impact - high - action plan completed as per guidance</i></p> <p><i>No impact</i></p> <p><b>No policy will be approved without a completed equality impact assessment</b></p>
<b>Other relevant approved documents</b>	<p>Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs, June 2019</p> <p><a href="https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/items-which-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-v2.1.pdf">https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/items-which-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-v2.1.pdf</a></p>
<b>Evidence base / Legislation</b>	<p>Level of Evidence:</p> <p><i>A. based on national research-based evidence and is considered best evidence</i></p> <p><b>B. mix of national and local consensus</b></p> <p><i>C. based on local good practice and consensus in the absence of national research based information.</i></p>
<b>Dissemination</b>	Is there any reason why any part of this document should not be available on the public web site? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes / No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Approved by</b>	<i>Norfolk &amp; Waveney Therapeutics Advisory Group (TAG) (Date)</i>
<b>Authorised by</b>	<i>Norfolk &amp; Waveney Drug Integrated Care Board on behalf of the ICS (Date)</i>
<b>Review date and by whom</b>	Medicines Optimisation Team
<b>Date of issue</b>	Oct 2023

Version Number	Author	Purpose / Change	Date
0.1	MO Team	To support prescribing in primary care	Oct 2023