



Norfolk and Waveney
Integrated Care Board

NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB
Medicines Optimisation Team
Floor 8 County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich
Norfolk
NR1 2DH

<Date>

Private and Confidential

<Patient Name>

<Patient Address>

Dear < insert patient name >

Review of Prescribing: Herbal preparations

The local NHS, Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board, regularly review the medicines prescribed to ensure that our local doctors are using the most effective and good value medicines.

We are reviewing the usage of herbal preparations in line with current national guidelines.

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.

Why will herbal treatments not be prescribed anymore?

- 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 and if they have a 'traditional herbal registration'.
- However, there is no need to prove that a herbal treatment actually works; the registration is just based on the fact that the product has been used as a traditional medicine for a long time.
- 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 work, that they are 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.

- In the past some herbal medicines have been prescribed on the NHS. However, because the NHS needs to make sure that it only spends money on treatments that have evidence that they work, they will no longer be prescribed on the NHS.

If you still wish to continue to use a herbal preparation, they can be purchased from a pharmacy over the counter. Please ensure your doctor is aware that you are buying the herbal preparation as it may interfere with how other medicines work

Should you require more information about this, please contact the Contact Us Team at nwicb.contactus@nhs.net , they will be able to put you in contact with the appropriate person.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Douglass', written in a cursive style.

**Dr Andrew Douglass MBBS MRCGP
Specialty Advisor for Prescribing and Elective Recovery
NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB**