NHS
Suffolk and
North East Essex

Position Statement for Medicines of Low Value

HOMEOPATHY

Summary

The Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board (SNEE ICB) does not support the prescribing of homeopathy products on prescription in line with NHS England's national guidance on medicines of low clinical value.

All homeopathy products are classed as "Double Red" i.e., no prescribing in primary or secondary care

There are no patient exceptionalities identified

Homeopathy seeks to treat patients with highly diluted substances that are administered orally. The principles on which homeopathy is based are very different to conventional medical beliefs. Two theories central to homeopathy are:

- Like cures like: A substance, that could in conventional doses cause an undesirable effect, is used, in very dilute amounts, to treat that symptom.
- The more dilute a preparation is the more potent it is. Homeopathic remedies are prepared by repeated dilutions of a base substance. The dilution process is known as potentisation, implying that each subsequent dilution and succussion increases the potency of the preparation.

A review of the evidence was commissioned from the Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) by NHS England. The SPS review found that there was no clear or robust evidence base to support the use of homeopathy in the NHS.

DEPRESCRIBING ADVICE

- **Deprescribe herbal medicines for all patients who have these products on repeat or acute**
- Patients should be advised of the lack of robust evidence to support its ongoing use and the products are unlikely to help their condition
- Patients should be made aware that these cannot be prescribed by GP practices under any circumstances
- Consider reviewing their condition with one or more outcomes where appropriate
    - Appropriate lifestyle advice
    - Considering OTC purchase of licensed medicines
    - Prescribing licensed medicine
- Patients who continue taking homeopathic products medicines should have them recorded on the clinical system as they may interact with licensed medication

Produced by the SNEE ICB Medicines Optimisation Teams (MOT) in collaboration with East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT) and West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (WSFT) version 1.0

Approved by the SNEE Integrated Medicines Optimisation Sub-Committee (IMOC) November 2022 for review November 2024

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NEW PATIENTS

- **Do not prescribe homeopathic products under any circumstances**
- Patients should be advised of the lack of robust evidence to support its use and the products are unlikely to help their condition
- Patients should be made aware that these cannot be prescribed by GP practices under any circumstances
- Patients who initiate any homeopathic products themselves should have these recorded on the clinical system as they may interact with licensed medication

FURTHER SUPPORT

- National Patient Information Leaflets have been developed and can be supplied to patients to help support the deprescribing of these products (click here)
- Patients who wish to seek further clarification can be directed to Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) via:
    - E-mail: sneeicb.pals@nhs.net
    - Telephone: 0800 389 6819

Reference

NHSE. (2019, June). *Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care.* Retrieved from https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/items-which-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-v2.1.pdf

Services, S. P. (2017, October). *Clinical evidence for homeopathy.* Retrieved from SPS: https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/sps-homeopathy.pdf

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