



## Lincolnshire East Clinical Commissioning Group

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Dear Colleagues

You will be aware that the four Lincolnshire CCGs recently consulted the public about prescribing of products which are available to buy over the counter, and that following this consultation the OTC initiative was launched on 12th December. Please see attached press release as a reminder. Following the launch it has become apparent that there are concerns amongst prescribers regarding the GMC contract and the supply of prescriptions to patients diagnosed with a condition.

In order to address these concerns the Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Service has sought a copy of the legal advice provided to the Leicestershire CCGs with regard to the same issue. This information is also attached, and includes the advice that: "Prescribing is used to describe many related activities, including supply of prescription only medicines, prescribing medicines, devices and dressings on the NHS, and advising patients on the purchase of over the counter medicines and other remedies." This advice has been shared with the LMC and their interpretation is relayed in the attached email.

I hope you feel that the legal advice and LMC interpretation empower you to have a supportive conversation with appropriate patients around the merits of self-care and how patients might approach this in terms of buying their own products in circumstances when it is safe and appropriate to do so.

The decision to consult on products available to buy over the counter was made for a number of reasons; not least the very serious financial situation of the CCG but also the longer term impact in terms of reduced GP consultations and prescription requests. I would urge you to support the initiative and to hold conversations with appropriate patients about self-care and to direct them to purchase their own over the counter remedies whenever possible.

In order to support you in this, there is a countywide project group which is working on various elements where there may be implications for particular groups of patients, for example; school children who require doses of medication during school hours, residential home patients, children from low-income families as well as ensuring that prescribers across the whole health care system are aware of, and follow, the guidance around buying appropriate products over the counter and self-care e.g. our secondary care colleagues.

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These project sub groups are working as quickly as possible to provide you with clear guidance to complement the "Policy to reduce general practice consultations and prescriptions for minor conditions suitable for self-care (December 2016)" and the "Lincolnshire PACEF Drop List Or 'Black List': Drugs To Review For Optimised Prescribing" Pace Bulletin which were issued to Practices on 12<sup>th</sup> December to support the OTC launch.

Posters and patient information leaflets are being delivered to your Practice in the next couple of weeks.

If you have any queries or feedback, please speak to your locality clinical leaders or to Kerryn Marriott, Programme Lead for Prescribing.

Yours sincerely



**Gary James**  
**Accountable Officer**  
**Lincolnshire East CCG**



**Dr Stephen Baird**  
**Interim Chair**  
**Lincolnshire East CCG**