

Items which should not routinely be
prescribed in primary care:
A Consultation on guidance for CCGs

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Promoting equality and addressing health inequalities are at the heart of NHS England's values. Throughout the development of the policies and processes cited in this document, we have:

- Given due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic (as cited under the Equality Act 2010) and those who do not share it; and
- Given regard to the need to reduce inequalities between patients in access to, and outcomes from healthcare services and to ensure services are provided in an integrated way where this might reduce health inequalities

4.6 Herbal Treatments

Background	In the UK, the MHRA allows herbal products to be marketed for minor health conditions that don't require medical supervision, upon receipt of a traditional herbal registration (MHRA detailed guidance)
Annual Spend	£100,009 (Source: NHS Business Services Authority)
Rationale for recommendation	<p>Under a Traditional Herbal Registration there is no requirement to prove scientifically that a product works, the registration is based on longstanding use of the product as a traditional medicine.</p> <p>Due to the lack of evidence provided in registering these products the group felt that they were suitable for inclusion in the proposed guidance.</p>
Category	Products of low clinical effectiveness, where there is a lack of robust evidence of clinical effectiveness or there are significant safety concerns
Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise CCGs that prescribers in primary care should not initiate herbal items for any new patient Advise CCGs to support prescribers in deprescribing herbal items in all patients and where appropriate, ensure the availability of relevant services to facilitate this change.

4.7 Homeopathy

Background	Homeopathy seeks to treat patients with highly diluted substances that are administered orally. (MHRA detailed guidance)
Annual Spend	£92,412 (NHS Digital)
Rationale for recommendation	<p>In 2010 a report by the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, found that the use of homeopathy was not evidence based and any benefits to patients was down to placebo effect.</p> <p>The group agreed with the findings of the committee for the lack of evidence and considered homeopathy suitable for inclusion in the proposed guidance.</p>
Category	Products of low clinical effectiveness, where there is a lack of robust evidence of clinical effectiveness or there are significant safety concerns
Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise CCGs that prescribers in primary care should not initiate homeopathic items for any new patient Advise CCGs to support prescribers in deprescribing homeopathic items in all patients and, where appropriate, ensure the availability of relevant services to facilitate this change.