

Policy Statement; Prescribing of dental preparations are not supported

Great Yarmouth & Waveney CCG does not support the prescribing of medicines or preparations (general toothpaste and mouthwashes) for dental conditions on GP FP10 prescription except in the following circumstances:

- Where the GP is the responsible clinician for assessing and monitoring the effectiveness of treatment.
- For emergency treatment of patients unable to access a dentist.
- After head and neck cancer treatment on the recommendation of a Head and Neck or Restorative Dental Consultant.

It is not clinically appropriate for medicines for dental conditions to be supplied via the GP prescription route when patients have been assessed by a dentist and treatment initiated by them. Some dental medicines require ongoing monitoring and clinical assessment by the dentist, which is in keeping with the dentist retaining the responsibility for prescribing. For example high fluoride toothpastes. It is important to ensure that patients who are prescribed high concentration fluoride toothpaste are under the care of a dental team in order to receive regular monitoring and management of their dental decay risk.

Dental self-care and purchasing of general or over the counter dental products should be promoted. Oral health is an integral part of general health. Poor oral health can have a detrimental effect on general health resulting in a significant impact on quality of life. Dental caries (dental decay) is one of the main contributors to poor oral health. As regular tooth brushing forms part of the daily routine of the majority of people, it is viewed as a simple but key method of applying fluoride to the tooth.

Obtaining medicines for dental conditions

There are various routes by which a dentist can provide patients with, or direct them to appropriate medicines:

- Dentists can issue NHS prescriptions for medicines from the Dental Practitioners' Formulary for treatment provided within an NHS contract. Click on the link below to view the dental prescribing formulary:
<https://www.evidence.nhs.uk/formulary/bnf/current/dental-practitioners-formulary/list-of-dental-preparations>
- Dentists can issue private prescriptions.
- In some circumstances, dentists are also able to sell medicines directly to patients.
- Dentists, like other healthcare professionals, are also able to signpost patients to appropriate forms of self-care, e.g. direct them to a community pharmacy to purchase an over the counter analgesic

Summary

Dentists are usually best placed to assess dental problems, and prescribe and monitor medicines for them. Involving GPs in prescribing medicines for dental conditions is usually unnecessary, and uses valuable appointment/GP time which could be better utilised. Getting GPs to prescribe medicines for dental conditions means that the GP is responsible for both the prescribing and any consequent monitoring required, for which they may not be the most appropriate clinical practitioner.

Providers commissioned to provide services on behalf of Great Yarmouth & Waveney CCG are reminded that they are required to follow the Great Yarmouth & Waveney CCG formulary and prescribing guidance as detailed in their contract (Medicines Management Service Specification).