

January 2018

To whom it may concern,

Re: Changes to the way we prescribe in Leeds - Clarification

I am writing to clarify the contents of the letter dated 3 January 2018 which you have recently received and update you on the current situation in Leeds. Our previous letter followed the consultation on proposals to change the way some items are prescribed by the NHS in Leeds, and included:

- Not routinely prescribing gluten-free foods
- Not routinely prescribing over-the-counter (OTC) medicines
- Not routinely prescribing branded medicines when a non-branded equivalent is available.

Leeds Clinical Commissioning Groups Partnership has agreed that we will await a decision from the Department of Health, (DoH) on the prescribing of gluten free foods. We are currently not advising GP's in Leeds to stop prescribing gluten free products and will follow the DoH decision.

With regards to OTC and branded medicines we are supportive of the principles of the proposal but we are aware that for such a large change in prescribing culture the implementation of this guidance needs to be planned and agreed with all stakeholders. We also want to consider the national consultation being undertaken by NHS England which started after us sending out our proposal.

This means that we will not be implementing the proposed changes in prescribing in relation to the consultation in February 2018, the time scale stated in our original letter.

We would be grateful if you would share the following key information with your practice team and community pharmacy teams as soon as possible.

Key messages

- The Leeds CCGs Partnership will await a decision from the Department of Health on the prescribing of gluten free foods before making any recommendations in relation to the prescribing of these products
- The Leeds CCGs Partnership will not be implementing a change to prescribing OTC medicines until further stakeholder engagement and planning has been undertaken. The timescales for this are to be determined but changes will not occur in February 2018 as stated in our original letter.
- The Leeds CCGs Partnership will continue to review the prescribing of branded

medicines where there is a non-branded equivalent available and will inform you of any proposed changes in recommendations for individual products.

- Please do not advise patients that their gluten-free / OTC medicine may no longer be prescribed. The current advice is that these are still available where they have been previously prescribed.
- Patients, practices and community pharmacy who have any queries about the proposed changes should be directed to medicineleedswest@nhs.net
- Where individual practices have taken the decision to make changes in their prescribing, that is an individual decision, please discuss any concerns directly with the practice team.
- We apologise for the ambiguity of our last letter. Our intention was to keep community pharmacy informed so that if any changes in prescribing in these areas were agreed you would be able to support patients more effectively having been kept up to date with progress on the proposals. We apologise that it was not clearer that the final decision relating to these changes was still to be made.

We would also like to sincerely apologise for any confusion or inconvenience this may have caused. We will be in touch in the future with further information, once we have discussed the final guidance with the Governing Body which will include timescales and more detailed plans for any agreed changes in prescribing.

If you have any questions or queries, please contact medicineleedswest@nhs.net

Yours sincerely,

Leeds CCG's Partnership Medicines Optimisation Commissioning Team