

This Medicines Information Leaflet is produced locally to optimise the use of medicines by encouraging prescribing that is safe, clinically appropriate and cost-effective to the NHS.

Traffic Light Classification for Prescribing across the NHS in Oxfordshire

The purpose of this MIL is to ensure prescribers within the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUHFT) are aware of the concept of the Traffic Light System for classification of prescribing across NHS Oxfordshire.

The Area Prescribing Committee Oxfordshire (APCO) provides recommendations on prescribing and medicines optimisation across the Oxfordshire Health Economy. The committee consists of GPs, representatives from the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) Medicines Optimisation Team and representatives from healthcare providers across Oxfordshire particularly Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUHFT), Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (OHFT), Local Medical Committee and Local Pharmaceutical Committee.

APCO will evaluate evidence base and cost effectiveness on the use of medicines and work to develop local prescribing and medicines optimisation policies, guidance and shared care protocols. Decisions are made on whether medicines should be considered for commissioning within primary care, or perhaps in the case of more specialist medicines are more appropriately managed and prescribed in secondary care. In some cases 'shared care' protocols are agreed which outline shared responsibility for prescribing and monitoring between secondary and primary care. All recommendations made by APCO are submitted to the OCCG Clinical Ratification Group for ratification before commissioning implementation.

Commissioning Policy Statements (Lavender Statements) are approved by the Clinical Ratification Group. NHS organisations caring for

Oxfordshire patients must take account of these policy statements when considering treatments.

The Traffic Light classification of all medicines can now be found on the new OCCG online formulary (accessed via www.oxfordshireformulary.nhs.uk). This information will guide prescribers when deciding whether it is appropriate for GPs to take on the prescribing of certain medicines and contains hyperlinks to prescribing guidance and shared care protocols.

Traffic Light Classification key:

RED	Red: Medicines which should only be prescribed in secondary care by a specialist.
AMB C	Amber Continuation: Medicines which should be initiated or recommended by a specialist for continuation in primary care. The specialist must notify the GP that the prescribing responsibility has been transferred.
AMB SCP	Amber Shared Care Protocol: Medicines which are appropriate to be initiated and stabilised by a specialist, once stabilised the medicine may be appropriate for responsibility to be transferred from secondary to primary care with the agreement of a GP and a formal 'shared care' agreement. The shared care protocol must be approved by the Area Prescribing Committee Oxfordshire (APCO).
GREEN	Green: Medicines which are suitable for initiation and ongoing prescribing within primary care.
BROWN	Brown: Medicines which should only be prescribed in restricted circumstances.
BLACK	Black: Medicines which are not recommended for use because of lack of evidence of clinical effectiveness, cost effectiveness or safety.

Decision making around prescribing of medicines across NHS Oxfordshire

OUHFT Medicines Management and Therapeutic Committee (MMTC) evaluates evidence base and cost effectiveness and makes decisions around formulary additions for OUHFT. If MMTC approves a new drug for the OUHFT formulary the decision to release the product will still be contingent on identification of the relevant funding stream.

Any new medicine or shared care protocol requires a submission and agreement by APCO prior to any recommendations to patients or GPs for primary care prescribing.

All prescribing and prescribing requests made to GPs, by OUHFT clinicians should be in accordance with the Oxfordshire Medicines Formulary, Commissioning Policy Statements and Area

Prescribing Committee approved guidelines and policies. The consequence of an OUHFT clinician prescribing outside these guidelines is reimbursement of the costs incurred by the Commissioners.

Useful links:

[Oxfordshire Medicines Formulary](#)

[Shared Care Protocols](#)

[OCCG Clinical Guidelines](#)

[Lavender Statements](#)

Prepared by:

Sara Wilds (Head of Medicines Management and Urgent Care)
March 2011.

Updated by Odelia Eke (Medicines Optimisation Pharmacist)
April 2017.

Review date: April 2020