

## Prescribing of Cannabis is not supported

**Thurrock CCG, and Basildon and Brentwood CCG do not support the prescribing of any Cannabis products for any indication in primary care.**

Cannabis is a broad term to describe organic products (e.g. marijuana and hemp) that contain amongst other chemicals, CBD (Cannabidiol) and THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol).

THC is the principal psychoactive component of cannabis and is subject to the highest level of control under UK medicines legislation. Cannabis is classified as a Class B drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, based on a harms assessment.

The government has announced that medicinal cannabis can be legally prescribed to patients from 1st November 2018.

The decision to prescribe unlicensed medicinal cannabis products must be made by a specialist doctor listed on the General Medical Council's specialist register. However, cannabis will remain illegal when used for recreational purposes, and there will be no changes to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 classification of cannabis or any of the penalties for illicit offences related to cannabis.

### Recommendations:

- Although cannabis sativa extract (Sativex<sup>®</sup>) is licensed to treat spasticity in multiple sclerosis, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) does not recommend it for this indication as it is not cost-effective. NICE guidance for multiple sclerosis in adults offers alternative treatment options for spasticity. Therefore, Sativex<sup>®</sup> should **not** be prescribed.
- NICE does not recommend cannabis sativa extract to treat neuropathic pain in non-specialist settings and it is not licensed for use in neuropathic pain. It should therefore **not** be prescribed. In South West Essex this drug is for hospital specialist use only; it must not be prescribed in primary care.
- The Home Office has stated that the decision to prescribe these unlicensed medicinal cannabis products from 1st November 2018 must be made by a specialist doctor listed on the GMC specialist register – **not a GP or GP with Specialist Interest**. The specialist must make decisions on prescribing cannabis-based products for medicinal use on a case-by-case basis, and only when the patient has an unmet special clinical need that cannot be met by licensed products.
- Medicinal cannabis is **NOT suitable for shared care**.
- **Do not prescribe cannabis in primary care – including unlicensed or any future licensed cannabis products.**

Providers commissioned to provide services on behalf of Thurrock CCG and Basildon and Brentwood CCG are reminded that they are required to follow the local joint formulary and prescribing guidance, or relevant Medicines Management agreement.

<b>Position Statement No.</b>	37
<b>Title</b>	Prescribing of Cannabis is not supported
<b>References</b>	NICE CG 186 Multiple sclerosis in adults: management. <a href="https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG186">https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG186</a> . National institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidance Do Not Do Recommendations. <a href="https://www.nice.org.uk/savingsandproductivity/collection?page=1&amp;pagesize=2000&amp;type=do%20not%20do">https://www.nice.org.uk/savingsandproductivity/collection?page=1&amp;pagesize=2000&amp;type=do%20not%20do</a> NICE CG173 - Neuropathic Pain in adults: pharmacological management in non specialist setting. <a href="https://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/cg173">https://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/cg173</a>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	Mid Essex CCG Medicines Management Team
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