

Prescribing of Herbal Treatments is not supported

Thurrock CCG, and Basildon and Brentwood CCG do not support the prescribing of herbal treatments due to low clinical effectiveness, and this position is supported by NHS England.

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, and therefore there is a lack of robust evidence of clinical effectiveness for these products.

Recommendations

- Herbal treatments should **not** be recommended or prescribed at NHS expense due to the lack of evidence for clinical effectiveness.
- If previously prescribed, homeopathic remedies should be stopped and patients advised to buy over the counter in pharmacies or in health shops.
- Check if patients are taking any herbal medicines for interactions and/or unwanted effects. Some herbal medicines may be associated with adverse effects and may interact with other mainstream medicines/healthcare.
- Note: the use of herbal medicines could delay accurate diagnosis of an underlying pathology.

This position is supported by NHS England as part of the items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care.

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.

Position Statement No.	45
Title	Prescribing of Herbal Treatments is not supported
References	NHS England guidance on 'Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care' (June 2019): https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/items-which-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-v2.1.pdf
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