

## Prescribing of homeopathic remedies is not supported

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

Homeopathy seeks to treat patients with highly diluted substances that are administered orally. Two theories central to homeopathy are:

- Like cures like: A substance, that could in conventional doses cause an undesirable effect, is used, in very dilute amounts, to treat that symptom.
- The more dilute a preparation is the more potent it is. Homeopathic remedies are prepared by repeated dilutions of a base substance. The dilution process is known as potentisation, implying that each subsequent dilution and succession increases the potency of the preparation.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) does not recommend homeopathy for the treatment of any health condition. NICE specifically recommends against the use of homeopathy for the treatment of otitis media with effusion, induction of labour or treatment of lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS) in men.

The UK Science and Technology Committee report into homeopathy in 2010 concluded that the systematic reviews and meta-analyses conclusively demonstrate that homeopathic products perform no better than placebos.

### Recommendations

- Complementary and alternative medicines should **not** be recommended or prescribed at NHS expense due to the lack of evidence for clinical effectiveness. There is a lack of robust, randomised controlled trials directly comparing complementary medicines with standard treatment.
- If previously prescribed, homeopathic remedies should be stopped and patients advised to buy over the counter in pharmacies or in health shops.
- NHS patients should not be referred to a complementary and/or alternative medical practitioner.
- Check if patients are taking any complementary or alternative therapies for interactions and/or unwanted effects. Some complementary and alternative medicines may be associated with adverse effects and may interact with other mainstream medicines/healthcare.
- Note: the use of complementary and alternative 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.

<b>Position Statement No.</b>	46
<b>Title</b>	Prescribing of homeopathic remedies is not supported
<b>References</b>	Specialist Pharmacy Services (SPS) Clinical evidence for homeopathy: <a href="https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/sps-homeopathy.pdf">https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/sps-homeopathy.pdf</a>  NHS England guidance on 'Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care' (June 2019): <a href="https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/items-which-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-v2.1.pdf">https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/items-which-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-v2.1.pdf</a>
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