

MID AND SOUTH ESSEX MEDICINES OPTIMISATION COMMITTEE (MSEMOC)

CANNABIS BASED MEDICINAL PREPARATIONS

RED: RECOMMENDED FOR RESTRICTED PRESCRIBING BY SPECIALIST ONLY LISTED ON THE GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL'S SPECIALIST REGISTER FOR THE DEFINED APPROVED INDICATIONS WITHIN PAEDIATRICS AND NEUROLOGY. NOT RECOMMENDED FOR PRESCRIBING IN PRIMARY OR COMMUNITY CARE

BLACK: NOT RECOMMENDED FOR PRESCRIBING IN PRIMARY, SECONDARY OR COMMUNITY CARE IN ANY OTHER INDICATION

Mid and South Essex CCGs 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, cannabidiol (CBD) and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).

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 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 (GMC) specialist register for the defined approved indications. 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[®]) is licensed to treat spasticity in multiple sclerosis, and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance on medicinal cannabis indicates it may be an option, there are alternative treatment options for spasticity and Sativex[®] is not included on the local formulary. Therefore, Sativex[®] 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.
- 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; prescribing by primary care prescribers is not permitted.** 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.
- Patients requesting prescriptions who are currently under the care of a specialist should be advised to discuss their treatment plan with the specialist.
- Patients requesting prescriptions who are not currently under the care of a specialist should only be referred to specialist services where clinically appropriate and in line with current pathways.
- Information for patients on the availability of cannabis-based medicinal products is available on the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/medical-cannabis/>.
- Medicinal cannabis is **NOT considered suitable for shared care in Mid and South Essex.**
- **Do not prescribe cannabis in primary care – including unlicensed or any future licensed cannabis products.**

NICE TA614 and NICE TA615

- NICE TA614 states that cannabidiol is an option with clobazam in patients over 2 years of age with Dravet syndrome. This is commissioned by NHS England from **SPECIALIST CENTRES ONLY**.
- NICE TA615 states that cannabidiol is an option with clobazam in patients over 2 years of age with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome. This is commissioned by NHS England from **SPECIALIST CENTRES ONLY**.

Cannabidiols are therefore commissioned in line with the TAs from specialist centres and on-going prescribing should remain in these centres and NOT be transferred to primary care.

Providers commissioned to provide services on behalf of Mid and South Essex CCGs are reminded that they are required to follow the local joint formulary and prescribing guidance, as detailed in the medicines management service specification of their contract.



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| References | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ NICE CG 186 Multiple sclerosis in adults: management: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG186▪ NICE CG173 – Neuropathic Pain in adults: pharmacological management in non specialist setting: https://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/cg173▪ NICE TA 614 – Cannabidiol with clobazam for treating seizures associated with Dravet syndrome: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta614▪ NICE TA 615 – Cannabidiol with clobazam for treating seizures associated with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta615▪ NICE NG 144 – Cannabis medicinal products: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng144 |
| Acknowledgements | Mid and South Essex CCGs Medicines Management Teams |
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