

Primary Care Commissioning Committee

Date of meeting	30 April 2020		
Agenda item	9	Paper No	PCCC20/025

Primary Care Prescribing –April 2020

Key issues	This paper summarises the work of the CCG medicines optimisation team as part of the response to COVID-19
Strategic objectives / perspectives	<p>This paper addresses the following CCG strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure safe and sustainable high quality services - improved medication review and deprescribing of problematic medicines and antimicrobial stewardship • Establish local delivery systems (the integrated pharmacy service is a high priority within the LDS) • Develop the CCG workforce (the development of a more clinical role for pharmacists is in line with the national direction of travel and supports the sustainability of primary care)
Actions requested / recommendation	The Primary Care Commissioning Committee is asked to note and comment on this report.
Principal risk(s) relating to this paper	There are no risks in relation to this paper.
Other committees / groups where evidence supporting this paper has been considered	None
Financial and resource implications / impact	There are no financial implications arising from this paper.
Legal implications / impact	There are no legal implications arising from this paper.
Privacy impact assessment required?	No.

Public / stakeholder involvement – activity taken or planned	Not applicable.
Equality and diversity – implications / impact	Not applicable.
Report author	Dr Emma Harris, Clinical Director – Prescribing Neil Hardy, Associate Director Medicines Optimisation
Sponsoring director	Ellen McNicholas, Director of Quality and Board Nurse / Caldicott Guardian
Date of paper	28 April 2020

Primary Care Prescribing Report to Primary Care Commissioning Committee – 27 April 2020

1. Introduction

This paper summarises the work of the NHS West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) medicines optimisation team as part of the response to COVID-19.

2. Structure

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight (HIOW) Health and Social Care Cell established a medicines optimisation work stream in March 2020 and Neil Hardy, CCG Associate Director - Medicines Optimisation, was asked to lead this work stream. A group was therefore established that included the following:

- CCG Lead Pharmacists
- NHS Provider Organisation Chief Pharmacists
- Chief Officer HIOW Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC)
- Medicines Optimisation Lead Wessex Academic Health Sciences Network (AHSN)

This group was already in place to take forward the HIOW Strategic Transformation Partnership (STP) medicines optimisation plan and therefore easy to set up. The group currently has a weekly teleconference on a Friday.

In addition there are twice weekly calls with the Regional South East Medicines and Pharmacy Coordination Group and a weekly National call with Dr Keith Ridge, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) / NHS England and Improvement (NHSE&I).

The work stream feeds into the HIOW Health and Social Care Cell as well as to the Regional and National groups.

3. Primary Care Prescribing

The CCG medicines optimisation team has reprioritised its work to support general practices and community pharmacies during this period. All non-essential work (for example cost saving interventions) has been temporally discontinued so as to not add any further pressure to the primary care workforce.

Examples of the work that the team has been doing include:

- Continuing to support GPs with queries on medicines shortages and patient queries. Most of the team now have remote access to the GP clinical systems allowing them to be sent tasks electronically.
- Supporting GPs to switch patients to electronic prescriptions (EPS) and, where appropriate, electronic repeat dispensing (eRD). This reduces the need for the transfer of paper prescriptions between surgery and pharmacy.
- Supporting dispensing practices that have staff shortages in their dispensaries.
- Supporting GPs to switch suitable patients from warfarin to a direct acting oral anticoagulant thus avoiding the need for INR testing
- Producing a HIOW-wide medicines optimisation bulletin that contains COVID-19 related guidance and advice. To date eight newsletters have been published which reflects the number of COVID-19 related medicines issues (e.g. treatment of pneumonia, alternatives to personally administered medicines such as Vitamin B12 injections).

A significant piece of work has been to support GPs, community nurses and hospice teams so as to ensure the timely availability of medicines required in palliative care. This work has included:

- Agreeing an enhanced list of medicines stocked by a number of locally commissioned community pharmacies. The list reflects the revised Wessex palliative care guidelines.
- Working with PCNs and practices to ensure they have immediate access to a small stock of medicines for home visits. This has included offering GPs access to a range of pre-packs (manufactured by Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust (PHT) that hold a manufacturing licence) for immediate use.

4. Community Pharmacy Services

We have been working with the Head of Primary Care Commissioning NHSE&I South Region and the LPC Chief Officer to support community pharmacy. Actions include:

- Developing guidance on managing queues outside of community pharmacies – recognising that many are in small premises where social distancing is difficult.
- Developing guidance for volunteers that are undertaking medicines deliveries on behalf of others – recognising the additional safeguards required with medicines.
- Liaising with community pharmacies on medicines shortages and suitable alternatives.

5. Workforce

The HIOW medicines optimisation work stream receives regular updates on the workforce, including sickness levels, for each organisation and there is an offer of mutual aid between organisations – for example a CCG pharmacist temporarily working in a provider trust. In addition pharmacists that have expressed an interest to return to practice through the national scheme have been placed with the most appropriate organisation locally.

6. Conclusions

The existence of the HIOW medicines optimisation work stream as part of the STP plan meant that establishing a COVID-19 group was relatively straight forward given the similar membership required.

The CCG medicines optimisation team has prioritised all its work to activities that support patients, GPs and others being able to access their medicines in a timely manner and in line with national guidelines. There has been a particular focus on medicines required in palliative care.

Whilst outside the scope of this report the medicines optimisation work stream also discusses priority issues for provider trusts such as access to medicines used in critical care and solutions to prescribing within virtual out-patients clinics.

7. Actions Requested

The CCG Primary Care Committee is asked to note and comment on this report.

Dr Emma Harris, Clinical Director – Prescribing
Neil Hardy, Associate Director, Medicines Optimisation
April 2020

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