

May 2019

INFORMATION FOR MATERNITY TEAMS

NEW PATHWAY TO OPTIMISE THE USE OF OVER THE COUNTER (OTC) MEDICINES FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

To make it easier for pregnant women to access medicines that can be purchased over the counter at pharmacies, the NW London Local Maternity System has worked closely with the Local Pharmacy Committees, Hospital Pharmacy Committees and the CCG Medicines Management Teams to provide a pathway and information that will standardise the advice given by healthcare providers. Women have been consulted and 94% already purchase OTC products in a non-standardised way.

This strategy also supports the NHS England guidance for Clinical Commissioning Groups on the treatment of conditions for which over the counter medicines should no longer be routinely prescribed:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/conditions-for-which-over-the-counter-items-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-guidance-for-ccgs/>

The agreed OTC guidance aims to optimise consistency throughout NW London and is attached.

If an OTC product is indicated, the healthcare professional should confirm that the woman is happy to buy over the counter. If so, give the completed and signed advice sheet to the woman so that she can take it to a pharmacy to buy the product. The pharmacy team will be able to support women with any further advice and information about the recommended products.

This process will make it quicker for women to access medicines, by reducing delays in administration and workload for primary care providers in writing prescriptions.

We hope this standardised pragmatic approach to accessing OTC products is helpful and will optimise care for pregnant women.

NORTH WEST LONDON LOCAL MATERNITY SYSTEM

If you have any queries, please address these to: maternity.nwl@nhs.net

Attachment: OTC Medicines List