

Position statement on the prescribing for dandruff in adults and adolescents

Following the NHS England guidance 'Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs' (March 2018) the following changes to prescribing have been agreed across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge.

From 16 March 2021
Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Groups (BHR CCGS) no longer supports the prescribing of treatment for dandruff in adults and adolescents

Decision

The decision to stop treatment for dandruff applies to ALL adult and adolescent patients across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge unless the patient fall into one of the exceptions listed below.

If symptoms are not improving or responding to treatment, then patients should be encouraged to seek further advice from a pharmacy, NHS app, NHS website or NHS 111. For care home patients: access to treatment should be considered via a care home policy.

Exceptions

BHR CCGs have agreed exceptions to this recommendation, where they accept that prescribing should continue in primary care for:

- Pregnancy or breastfeeding
- The clinician considers that the patient's ability to self-manage is compromised as a consequence of significant vulnerability to the extent that their health and/or wellbeing could be adversely affected, if reliant on self-care. Consideration should also be given to safeguarding issues

This decision was made because:

- Dandruff is a common skin condition. It can be defined as mild scaling of the scalp without itching. Dandruff isn't contagious or harmful and can be easily treated with over the counter antidandruff or anti-fungal shampoos
- Patients should be encouraged to manage mild dandruff with long term over the counter treatments that are widely available to purchase at reasonable cost at supermarkets, pharmacies and other retailers
- BHR CCGs have a duty to spend taxpayer's money wisely, to make sure they get the best value possible – especially when NHS funding is being severely squeezed and more patients are being seen with more complex health issues than ever before

References

1. NHS website: dandruff- last reviewed: 2 October 2019. Page accessed 23 April 2021 <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dandruff/>
2. NHS England and NHS Clinical Commissioners. Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs, March 2018. Publishing approval reference 07851 <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/conditions-for-which-over-the-counter-items-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-guidance-for-CCGs/>