

REPORT TO: Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 9 June 2016
Report of: Deputy Head of Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation
Subject/Title: Guidelines for Self Care
Responsible Body: NHS Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The CCG is considering implementing restrictions on prescribing medicines for conditions amenable to self care. The purpose of implementing this policy is to:
 - 1.1.1 Improve our population's health and wellbeing by encouraging them to take greater responsibility for their health
 - 1.1.2 Improve access to primary care by reducing the 20% of GP time and 40% of GP consultations used for minor ailments amenable to self care *and*
 - 1.1.3 Reduce the cost of medicines prescribed for patients with minor ailments amenable to self care by restricting prescribing of a number of medicines that are able to be purchased from general retail outlets (for General Sales List [GSL] medicines) and community pharmacies (for Pharmacy [P] medicines).

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the CCG conducts a programme of engagement and education to determine the views of patients, clinicians and the public on implementing a policy restricting access to a range of medicines in order to reduce unnecessary contacts with General Practice by upto 124,000 encounters per year and release approximately £500,000 of the CCG prescribing budget to support other services or treatments for more serious conditions.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Eastern Cheshire Caring Together Programme includes empowerment of our population to be responsible for their health and wellbeing as a key part of our strategy to improve healthcare. The NHS Constitution places a responsibility on patients and the public to recognise that they can make a significant contribution to good health, and to take personal responsibility for this. Increasingly, people can use the internet (e.g. NHS choices), telephone services (e.g. NHS 111), services such as the CATCH app and health care professionals other than GPs (e.g. community pharmacists) to obtain health advice and information.

- 3.2 The medicines included in the proposals for restricted access are available to purchase from retail outlets (General Sales List [GSL] items) and pharmacies (GSL and Pharmacy [P] medicines), and this provides assurance that they are reasonably safe to be used with little or no medical supervision.
- 3.3 Pharmacies and retail outlets are responsible for placing limits on purchased medicines where patients fall outside the “Summary of Product Characteristics” for each medicine. This provides a safety net for patients, and also provides the basis for exceptionality where some people will continue to be able to access medicines on prescription.
- 3.4 Most of the medicines included in the policy are available to purchase for less than the current prescription charge of £8.40, but patients who receive free prescriptions on the grounds of age, income or health status may consider the change adversely. Many other areas of the country have either already implemented similar policies or are considering making these changes.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All wards covered by Eastern Cheshire CCG.
- 4.2 As most people will experience a minor health condition from time to time, this proposal to reduce appointments with general practice and to restrict prescribing of medicines for self-care will impact across the whole population, but is not expected to make a significant difference to the health of the population since the medicines can be purchased “over the counter”.
- 4.3 The CCG engagement and education exercise will be developed to canvas views from the general population, with particular attention being paid to gathering view from groups who are exempt from the prescription charge including:
 - 4.3.1 Families / carers of children and young people
 - 4.3.2 Young people aged over 16 in full time education
 - 4.3.3 Pregnant women and new mothers
 - 4.3.4 Patients aged 60 or over
 - 4.3.5 Patients with long term health conditions that entitle them to free prescriptions
 - 4.3.6 People in receipt of low income benefits
- 4.4 Exceptionality on clinical grounds will be determined as per the policy and by health professionals either at the point of sale (in the case of community pharmacists) or during consultations (in the case of general practice). Medicines will continue to be available on prescription in these cases where a medicine is not available or suitable for purchase.
- 4.5 It is estimated that only 12% of people pay for prescriptions, and hence that there may be a disparity in consultation rates between patients who pay the prescription charge and patients who do not. The proposal removes this potential inequity from the system.

5.0 Background

- 5.1 The table in Appendix 1 summarises the medicines that the CCG is proposing that people purchase for themselves instead of receiving on prescription. Restricting prescribing of these items is expected to save approximately £500,000 per annum. It is more difficult to estimate the number of people affected by the change. The number of items is shown in the table and each item can be considered to be an

encounter with a health profession to prescribe the medicine, and another encounter with a community pharmacist to dispense it. However, it is not known if each item represents a prescription for a different person or several items for the same person, and it is more likely that some people will have received several items over the course of a year.

- 5.2 The Draft policy in Appendix 2 describes the proposed conditions and medicines considered suitable for Self Care without the need for a Primary Care appointment or an NHS prescription.

Appendix 3 shows an example of a draft poster we would adapt to encourage patients to be proactive and purchase medicines to keep at home for self-care purposes. It is proposed that patient education resources will be developed for this engagement and education exercise as part of our implementation approach.

- 5.3 The CCG has reviewed the approaches to consultation, and results, from elsewhere in the country in developing this scheme. In addition the CCG has received support for the approach advocated in this paper from a group formed to review “commissioning intentions” which includes members of the public and clinicians from Eastern Cheshire.

Additional engagement with patients, clinicians and the public will take the form of surveys promoted through online and offline channels, presentations at HealthVoice and Patient Participation Group meetings. The CCG communications and engagement team will also consider the viability of a large scale communications campaign consisting of posters and other printed literature as well as local radio adverts to promote the scheme. Engagement with Eastern Cheshire GPs will be facilitated through Locality Meetings and the CCG Members Newsletter.

6.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-constitution-for-england/the-nhs-constitution-for-england>

Appendix 1. Summary of number of encounters and cost of medicines that could be purchased for self care.

Table 1. Summary of treatments used for minor health conditions that it is proposed that people buy instead of obtaining on prescription.		
Type of medicine	Estimated Annual Items prescribed by NHS ECCCCG practices	Estimated Annual Cost of the Items Prescribed and Dispensed for ECCCCG residents.
Pain killers for minor conditions (e.g. acute back pain, headache, strains and sprains)	47,229	£166,640.49
Medicines for minor / acute gastrointestinal conditions (diarrhoea, constipation, haemorrhoids, indigestion)	30,087	£145,627.62
Cough and cold remedies (including cough and cold proprietary medicines and nasal congestion)	13,870	£72,844.50
Antihistamines and anti-inflammatory medicines for minor allergies (e.g. hay fever)	16,070	£43,795.10
Creams and ointments for minor skin conditions (e.g. rash, dermatitis, mild acne, cold sores and head lice)	13,367	£86,814.80
Products promoted to maintain good health (e.g. multivitamin preparations without a diagnosed deficiency, herbal and homeopathic products, probiotics, ear wax softeners, eye cleansing products, glucosamine, chondroitin, fish oils and co-enzyme Q)	3,338	£43,030.63
Total	123,959	£558,753.14

Note that the cost estimate is the cost of the medicines charged to the CCG prescribing budget; these costs do not include an estimate of the value of GP consultations and pharmacist dispensing fees associated with them.

Appendix 2. Proposed Self Care Policy

Guidelines for Self-Care

NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG recommends that patients are empowered to care for themselves with medicines that can be purchased for minor conditions when this is appropriate. The CCG recommends information and resources such as NHS choices, NHS 111 and community pharmacies to support people in determining which conditions are amenable to self-care with simple remedies that may be purchased from pharmacies and other outlets (e.g. supermarkets, health shops)

Improved levels of self-care within the population are expected to:

- Reduce demand for appointments in primary care, thus safeguarding appointments for patients with more serious health problems
- Reduce NHS expenditure on medicines that can be purchased, thus safeguarding resources for medicines that are only available on prescription.

It is estimated that up to 1 hour per day per GP time and £XX per month in NHS prescription costs could be avoided by the implementation of this guidance.

Background

The following tables show conditions that are generally suitable for self-care, and medicines that are available to purchase to relieve symptoms and /or aid recovery. It is recommended that patients are encouraged to manage these conditions without the need for a primary care appointment or NHS prescription. NHS choices and NHS 111 are available for advice online and by telephone, and community pharmacists can also advise patients about their conditions and appropriate medicines.

The following principles have been used when compiling the list of conditions and medicines/

1. The conditions included are able to be diagnosed without medical help
2. The conditions can be treated with over the counter (P and GSL) medicines, or will resolve without any treatment
3. All contraindication and cautions in the product summary of characteristics will apply at the point of sale, and are not detailed in the lists below. Common exclusions to sales of medicines will be young children and women who are pregnant or breastfeeding.
4. This guidance applies only to situations where NHS Choices recommends self-care. For some conditions this will be related to the severity of the condition (e.g. mild acne is included but severe acne requires prescription medicines) and/or to the duration of the condition (for example cough that has persisted for more than 3 weeks requires a GP appointment).
5. Where patients consult for the self-care amenable conditions, prescribers and patients should be mindful that treatments prescribed will be those that are licensed as medicines, cost-effective and provide a clear health benefit. This excludes many preparations considered to be foods or health supplements. Patients can expect that they may be directed to purchase medicines for the conditions included in the following lists

Conditions / Situation	Example of medicines that can be purchased (P and GSL presentations)	Example Products (This list gives examples and is not exhaustive_	Exceptions and instances where conditions may require a medical opinion (refer to NHS choices and individual product Summary of Product Characteristics for further information)	Comments
Back Pain / Headache / Strains and Sprains / Period Pain	Paracetamol NSAIDs such as Ibuprofen Combination analgesics (e.g. co-codamol)	Analgesics -brands include: Alka-Seltzer, Anadin, Calpol, Calprofen, Codis, Cuprofen, Disprin, Feminax, Galpamol Galprofen, Hedex / Hedex Extra, Ibucalm, Ibufem Mandafen, Mandanol Midrid, Migraleve Nurofen / Nurofen Plus Nuromol, Orbifen Panadol / Panadol Extra / Panadol Night pain / Panadol Ultra, Paracodol Paramol, Solpadeine / Solpadeine Max/ Solpadeine Migraine / Solpadeine Plus Syndol Headache Relief Ultramol, Veganin Rubefacients and topical analgesics: e.g. 4head, Algesal, Balmosa, Deep Freeze / Deep Heat Deep Relief Diffiam, Dubam, Dulbalm,	Back pain People needing more paracetamol than can be purchased (e.g. chronic pain requiring regular pain relief. If back pain accompanied by: high temperature (fever) unexplained weight loss a swelling or a deformity in the back it's constant and doesn't ease after lying down pain in the chest loss of bladder or bowel control an inability to pass urine numbness around the genitals, buttocks or back passage it's worse at night it started after an accident, such as after a car accident Headache Any headaches not relieved by over-the-counter treatments, or if they're so painful or frequent that they affect daily activities ability to work. Be aware of analgesic overuse headache Strains and sprains If the pain is particularly severe If the injured joint or muscle can't be moved If the injured limb or joint gives way when used If the injured area looks crooked or has unusual lumps or bumps (other than swelling)	GSL sales are limited to packs of 16 tablets/ capsules (aspirin, paracetamol and ibuprofen); P sales are limited to packs of 32 (aspirin and paracetamol) or 96 (ibuprofen) tablets/capsules

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		Fenbid, Hirudoid, Ibucalm, Ibugel, Ibuleve, Ibumousse Ibuspray, Jointace, Movelat Nurofen gel, Transvasin , Deep Relief joint pain gel, Paineaze, Phorpain, Quool, Radian B, Salonpas, Tiger Balm, Transvasin, Traxam, Voltarol emulgel	If there is numbness, discolouration or coldness in any part of the injured area If the symptoms haven't started to improve within a few days of self-treatment Note that Aspirin treatment is not suitable for children (<16 years) because of the risk of Reye's syndrome	
Heartburn and indigestion	Antacids Alginates Simethicone/dimethicone H2 Receptor antagonists Proton pump inhibitors	Acidex, Actonorm Altacite Plus Bisodol, Buccastem M Carbellon, Eno Entrocalm, Gavilast Gaviscon range including Gaviscon Advance Kolanticon, Maalox Mucogel, Nexium control Pantoloc, Peptac Pepto-Bismol, Remegel Rennie, Setlers Topal, Tums, Wind-eze Zantac 75	Symptoms are present several times a week over-the-counter medications aren't helping symptoms are severe There is difficulty swallowing The presence of persistent vomiting, vomiting blood or unexplained weight loss Onset of symptoms in middle age Dark tarry stools	NB many antacids aren't recommended for children under the age of 12 and people with certain health conditions, such as kidney disease.
Constipation and haemorrhoids	Laxatives	Brands include: Celevac, Dioctyl, Docusol Dulcoease, Dulcolax	Persistent symptoms that don't improve pain or bleeding. GP prescribing of alternative products appropriate for	

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	Pile (haemorrhoid) remedies	Duphalac, Entrolax Fybogel, Idrolax Laxido, Manevac Mil-Par, Molaxole Movicol, Normacol, Senokot Anacal , Anusol, Anusol plus, Anodesyn, Germoloids, Hemocane, Lanacane, Nupercainal, Preparation H	anal fissure or severe prolapsed or thrombosed haemorrhoids	
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	Rehydration products Antidiarrhoeals	Dioralyte Oralyte Diah-limit Diaquitte DioralEze Entrocalm Imodium Normaloe	Children under 12 should only have the rehydration products. Patients with significant long term conditions e.g. inflammatory bowel disease Diarrhoea / vomiting that persists for more than a week or has the following features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh blood in poo • persistent vomiting • a severe or continuous stomach ache • weight loss • signs of dehydration – including drowsiness, 	

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			<p>passing urine infrequently, and feeling lightheaded or dizzy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> poo is dark or black – this may be a sign of bleeding in the stomach 	
Coughs, colds and fever	<p>Cough mixtures</p> <p>Throat lozenges</p> <p>Throat sprays</p> <p>All in one cold and flu remedies</p>	<p>Benylin, Buttercup</p> <p>Calcough, Covonia</p> <p>Hill's Balsam, Histalix, J Collis Browne's, Jackson's All Fours, Kilkof, Meltus, Pavacol D, Potters, Pulmo Bailly, Robitussin, Tixylix, Veno's, Vicks</p> <p>Diffiam</p> <p>Strepsils lozenges</p> <p>Ultra Chloraseptic spray</p> <p>AAA Sore Throat Spray, Vicks, Tyrozets</p> <p>Merocaine lozenges</p> <p>Dequadin lozenges</p> <p>Beechams cold and flu remedies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Symptoms persisting for more than three weeks Breathing difficulties Chest pain or coughing up bloodstained mucus Fever and systemic symptoms such as confusion, excessive drowsiness, fits / seizures <p>Seek urgent medical advice for children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> under three months old with a temperature of 38C (101F) or above between three and six months old with a temperature of 39C (102F) or above 	

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	Paracetamol Ibuprofen	Benylin Day / Night Nurse Dolvan, Lemsip Nurofen Cold&flu, Olbas Max Strength, Vicks See under painful conditions list above		
Acute Nasal Congestion	Nasal sprays / drops Decongestants	Pseudoephedrine +/- other ingredients (brands include Benadryl Allergy Relief Plus Decongestant, Contac, Multi-Action Actifed Tablets, RobiCold, Sinutab, Sudafed) Nasal sprays / drops & inhalations (brands include Prevalin Allergy, Sterimar, Vicks Sinex, Vividrin, Olbas oil, /Calpol Sooth and Care, Otrivine)	Decongestants are not recommended for children under six years old and children under 12 years old shouldn't take them unless advised by a pharmacist or GP.	
Allergies	Antihistamines Eye drops	Acrivastine (brands include Benadryl Allergy Relief)	Patients with long term conditions with an allergic component e.g. eczema, asthma	

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	Nasal sprays /drops Creams and lotions	<p>Cetirizine (brands include BecoAllergy, Benadryl Allergy, Piriteze Allergy, Pollenshield, Zirtek)</p> <p>Chlorphenamine (brands include Allerief Solution, Hayleve, Piriton, Pollenase)</p> <p>Clemastine (brands include Tavegil)</p> <p>Cyproheptadine (brands include Periactin)</p> <p>Diphenhydramine (brands include Histergan)</p> <p>Loratadine (brands include Clarityn Allergy)</p> <p>Promethazine (brands include Phenergan)</p> <p>Steroid nasal sprays (brands</p>		

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		<p>include Beconase Hayfever Relief/Spray, Nasocort Allergy, Nasobec Hayfever, Nasofan Allergy, Pirinase Hayfever Nasal Spray, Vivabec)</p> <p>Xylometazoline (brands include Otrivine nasal drops/sprays, Sudafed Blocked nose)</p> <p>Eye drops (brands include Alomide Allergy Eye drops, Eylegry Eye drops, Artelac, Murine Hayfever Relief Eye drops, Opticrom Allergy, Optrex Hayfever Relief, Opticrom Hayfever, Optrex Allergy, Optrex Soothing , Otrivine-Antistatin Eye drops, Pollenase Allergy)</p> <p>Prevalin Allergy products Sterimar</p>		
Dry skin, rash,	Creams and lotions	E45, E45 Itch cream	Emollients only to be prescribed for patients with a	Many

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insect bites/stings & sunburn	Sunscreens After sun Moisturisers Bath /shower products Products for cradle cap and nappy rash	Aveeno Anthisan Balneum Calmurid Calamine lotion Care Itcheze Cetanorm Dermalex Diprobase Doublebase Drapolene Eurax Flexitol skin balm Germolene HC45 Histergan Hydromol Lanacane Lanacort cream Oilatum QV Sudocrem Unguentum Ultrabase Zerobase Ambre Solaire products Anthelios products Delph	confirmed diagnosis of significant skin disease (including eczema and psoriasis). Certain sunscreens (e.g. Uvistat) are allowed if people meet ACBS criteria as follows: Protection from UV radiation in abnormal cutaneous photosensitivity resulting from genetic disorders or photodermatoses, including vitiligo and those resulting from radiotherapy; chronic or recurrent herpes simplex labialis.	sunscreens are not prescribable on the NHS (Drug Tariff Part XVIII A).

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		products Riemann P20 products Sunsense products Uvistat products		
Acne	Benzoyl peroxide gel Face washes	Acnecide Brevoxyl Cepton Freederm Nicom Panoxyl Quinoderm	Moderate to severe cases where OTC products have failed (follow antibiotic and dermatology guidelines).	
Cold Sores	Aciclovir Cream	Blistex Bonjela Clearsore Cymex Lypsyl cold sore Virasorb Zovirax	Immunocompromised & Terminally ill patients Children under 12 years	
Head lice	Malathion, Permethrin, dimeticone and combs/kits	Derbac M Full Marks Hedrin Lyclear Nyda	Patients with sores on the scalp Concurrent scalp conditions (e.g. Psoriasis)	
Maintenance of good health	Vitamin and mineral supplements, tonics and sleeping aids	Metatone Haliborange Santogen Fruitivits Sachets	Patients meeting ACBS criteria for vitamin treatment High dose vitamin D for proven Vitamin D deficiency. Thiamine for alcohol related conditions & neurological complications. Vitamin	

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		Spatone Seven Seas Dreemon Night Calm NightAid Nytol Paxidorm Snoreeze Sominex	B12 deficiency. Vit B co preps treatment of re-feeding syndrome on dietetic advice Vitamin supplements for premature babies as advised by hospital. Cystic fibrosis patients	
	Mouthwashes/sprays	Oraldene, Coldzyme	Use in palliative care, active cancer treatment	
	Eye cleansing products:	Blepharitis products e.g. Blephaclean Eye Lid Wipe, Blephagel, Brolene, Carmize, Celluvisc Lid-Care Eyelid Wipe Refresh Ophth Soln 0.4ml U Ster Eye Cleansing Wipes		
	Nutritional supplements	Products containing glucosamine, chondroitin, fish oils (e.g. Omacor), Co-enzyme Q		

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	Probiotics	VSL #3	VSL #3 may be prescribed by specialist for patients meeting ACBS criteria (i.e. maintenance of remission of ileoanal pouchitis induced by antibacterials in adults)	
	Herbal remedies	Aquaban St John's Wort preparations Echinacea preparations Pelargonium and Lobelia preparations Heathaid, Kalms, Nytol, Bach flower remedies Relaxaherb Bio Force products Potters products		
	Homeopathic remedies	Weleda products Nelson products		
	Ear wax remedies	Cerumol EarCalm Earex Otex Exterol Molcer		

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		Otex Waxsol		

Glossary:

GSL – a medicine on the General Sales List is one that is deemed suitable for purchase without any professional supervision


P medicines – Pharmacy only medicines that must be sold from registered pharmacy premises under the supervision of a qualified pharmacist.

OTC – Over the counter medicines, a general term encompassing both P and GSL medicines.

NSAIDs – non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, an example is ibuprofen.

Appendix 3. Proposed information poster / leaflet to advise the public on medicines to keep at home for self care.

Getting the right medicines



This year the NHS will cost around £124 billion, of which £14 billion (that's £38 million every day), will be spent on medicines.

With the age of the population increasing rapidly, the demand for medicines, and on the NHS as a whole, is growing dramatically. Everyone is trying to be more efficient these days, and medicines are one of the ways that the NHS can reduce costs whilst improving care. To make sure that you're getting the best possible care, the NHS aims to give you the right medicine. There are often several medicines to take for a condition that have the same benefits but with very different costs. By prescribing the right medicines for less, the NHS will have more money to invest in better care for everyone (such as the latest cancer treatments).

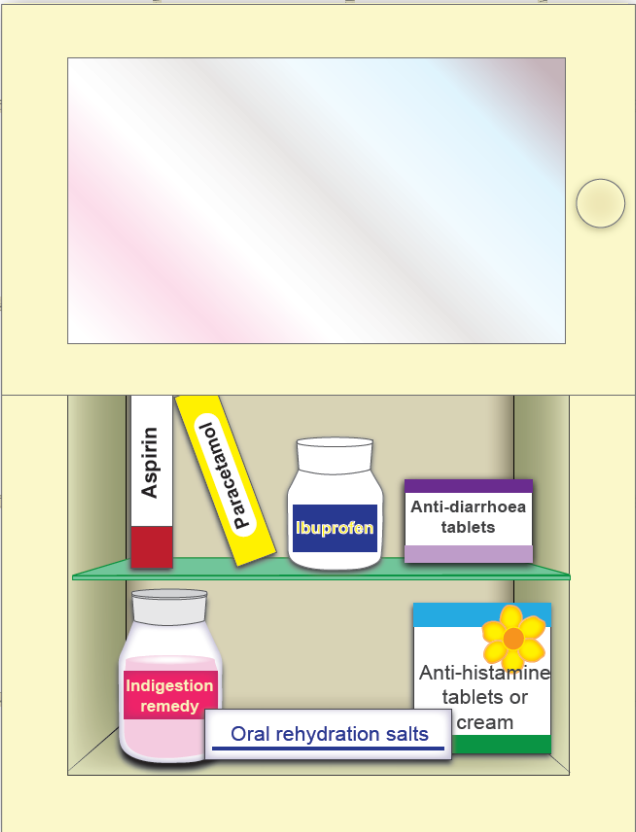
What does this mean for me?

Your GP practice may suggest that you change your prescribed medicine to another one. This will only happen if your GP is satisfied that the new medicine works as well as the previous one. In some cases it may even work better for you or have fewer side effects.

You might also be asked to buy some common medicines, available over-the-counter from your local chemist or a shop, rather than getting them on prescription.

These are often likely to be much cheaper than the cost of a prescription.

Why not set up your own home medicine cabinet so that you have things on hand when you need them.



To start putting together your own home medicine cabinet, go to:
www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Pharmacy/Pages/Yourmedicinecabinet.aspx
or speak to a pharmacist at your local pharmacy.

