

BSW CCG supports national recommendations for the treatment of dental conditions. The involvement of General Practice in prescribing medicines for dental conditions is usually inappropriate and unnecessary

GPs should not accept requests from dentists to prescribe medicines that the dentist could reasonably prescribe themselves.

Mouthwashes and toothpastes that require a prescription are for DENTAL prescription only. Long term management should be under their usual dentist. Dentists are better placed than GPs to assess the need for high-strength fluoride toothpaste or mouthwash and to monitor effects.

Introduction

- Dentists are responsible for assessing their patient's condition and prescribing within their competence.
- If a dentist deems that a medicine is needed to treat their patient's dental condition, and they are able to prescribe or direct the patient to that medicine via an appropriate route, it is reasonable to expect the dentist to do so rather than involve the GP.
- Patients being treated by a non-NHS Dentist should have their treatments prescribed privately. GPs should not accept requests to issue NHS prescriptions for these items.
- NHS Choices provides useful advice on when a dental appointment is needed, as well as information on local dentists and what to do if no dentist is available.
- Fluoride helps prevent caries. 2800ppm and 5000ppm toothpastes are prescription only; however, some commercially available brands have high fluoride content too.
- Prescribing acute or long term medication for dental conditions is generally not considered to be part of a GP's responsibilities. There are also many medications prescribed for dental conditions that can be appropriate for self-care. Patients can purchase these products over the counter aided by their Community Pharmacists and Dentists.
- General practice should not prescribe dental items if a patient has no dentist. Patients should be directed to find an available dentist via NHS England
<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/dentists/Pages/find-an-NHS-dentist.aspx>

Prescribing Guidance

GPs should not initiate the prescribing of high strength fluoride mouthwashes and toothpaste.

GPs should not generally take over the prescribing of high strength fluoride toothpaste or mouthwash. Prescribing is to remain with the dentist who originally initiated this treatment and who should be reviewing its effects and the need to continue on it.

Exceptions:

- Under the advice of secondary care specialists
 - Following Radiotherapy during active management
 - Haematological malignancies
 - Oral dermatological diseases
- For patients in residential care who receive community dental care, it is considered that is generally appropriate for GPs to follow up prescribing

Non-dental prescribers are advised that **dental abscesses must be treated by dentists**, and that **antibiotic prescribing is not routinely recommended**. Prescribers should not prescribe antibiotics while patients await definitive treatment, unless there is evidence of systemic sepsis, facial cellulitis or swelling or a background of systemic immune suppression.

Non-dental prescribers are reminded that they are not covered by their defence organisation or regulatory body when treating dental conditions.

BSWCCG Cost Impact

In the last 12 months (2019-2020), BSW CCG spent **over £23,000** on dental products (this figure does not include Antibiotic prescribing for dental abscesses).

References

1. Adapted, with permission, from Guidance for Dental Prescribing in Primary Care, Pan Mersey APC Nov '17
2. NHS Choices – Toothache and Dental abscesses. Accessed May 2019
3. PrescQIPP Bulletin, Medicines for dental conditions on FP10 Jan '15
4. PrescQipp Bulletin 95 (2015) Medicines for Dental Conditions on FP10. Available from: <https://www.prescqipp.info/-dental-products-on-fp10/send/140-dental-products-on-fp10/1736-dental-products-on-fp10> [Accessed 6 June 17].
5. 2. UKMi Medicines Q&A: When can dentists supply medicines? Available from: <https://www.sps.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/NW-QA193.4-When-can-dentists-supply-medicines-.pdf> [Accessed 6 June 2017].