

Position Statement for High Strength Fluoride Toothpastes

Indication: Prophylaxis of Dental Caries

Recommendation:

Routine prescribing of high strength fluoride toothpaste is not recommended in Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB except:

- on the advice of a secondary care specialist, in patients who have had surgery, radiotherapy and/or chemotherapy, who are unable to access a primary care dentist (see LSCMMG guidance <https://www.lancsmmg.nhs.uk/media/1826/fluoride-toothpaste-for-web-site.pdf>).
- where the patient falls under the general exemptions of the [NHS England Over the Counter Guidance](#).

NB. Where prescribing is recommended, clinicians other than dentists working in primary care should not prescribe high strength fluoride toothpaste where dentists could reasonably treat the patient.

Background

- The British Medical Association (BMA) has produced guidance to inform GPs of their obligations to patients requesting NHS prescription drugs for the treatment of dental problems.
- The BMA recommends that GPs should not attempt to manage a condition requiring dental skills unless they have appropriate training. [1]
- Prevention of dental caries is included by NHS England (NHSE) in the list of minor conditions associated with pain, discomfort and/fever which should not routinely prescribed for in primary care. [2]
- NHSE advise that a prescription for high fluoride OTC toothpaste should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
- NHSE include general exemptions where treatment is recommended in primary care.
- The LSCMMG has produced separate guidance recommending the prescribing of high fluoride toothpaste on the advice of a secondary care specialist, in patients who have had surgery, radiotherapy and/or chemotherapy, who are unable to access a primary care dentist. [3]

References

- [1] British Medical Association, "Patients presenting with dental problems," September 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/gp-practices/gp-service-provision/patients-presenting-with-dental-problems>. [Accessed November 2023].
- [2] NHS England, "Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs," 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf>. [Accessed November 2023].
- [3] Lancashire and South Cumbria Medicines Management Group, "Medicines Colour Classification Change Proposal Duraphat / sodium fluoride 1.1% toothpaste," August 2023. [Online]. Available: <https://www.lancsmmg.nhs.uk/media/1826/fluoride-toothpaste-for-web-site.pdf>. [Accessed November 2023].