

Position Statement: Use of 'homely remedies' and the management of minor, self-limiting conditions for those receiving care in their own home, foster home or in a care home.

People living in a care setting and those receiving care support in their own homes will, on occasion, need treatment for minor self-limiting conditions.

NHS Telford and Wrekin CCG recommends that all care homes and care providers have arrangements to allow patients to access a range of homely remedies or over the counter medicines for the management of self-limiting, minor conditions in a safe and timely manner.

Recommendations

- Care homes and care providers should ensure that patients have access to homely remedies for the management of minor conditions—this recommendation is in line with Care Quality Commission (CQC [Homely Remedy Guidance](#) (updated July 2018), NICE Guidance ([Managing Medicines in Care Homes](#), NICE Good Practice Guidance, March 2014), and the National Care Forum ([Safety of Medicines in Care Homes: Homely Remedies Guide](#), 2013).
- Access to homely medicines should be enabled through a specific policy, which forms part of an overall medicines policy for the care home or care provider. This is an important aspect of good medicines governance.
- For care homes, the homely remedy policy should describe how residents can access over-the-counter medicines that would commonly be available in any household. Advice from a healthcare professional on the use of homely remedies should be taken for each resident in advance, or at the time of need. This can be provided by the pharmacist (care home or community), care home nurse or the patient's GP.
- Care home residents (or their representatives) should be able to bring in over-the-counter medicines for self-administration. Care home staff must be made aware of any medicines entering the care home. A senior care assistant or nurse in charge must provide authorisation for use before self-administration.
- People who receive social care should be supported to access over-the-counter medicines (OTC) to enable them to self-care. Advice on the appropriateness and safety of over the counter medication to manage self-limiting illness must be sought from a community pharmacist. Access to OTC medicines to self-care is an issue of equality and providers must have policies in place to support people who wish to access OTC products in a timely manner.
- The administration of a homely remedy must be clearly entered on the patient's medicines administration record (MAR chart) and in their care plan. The entry on the MAR chart must be clearly marked 'homely remedy'.
- The administration of over the counter self-care treatment must be clearly entered on to the patient's medicines administration record (MAR chart) and in their care plan. For patients in their own home, administration of any OTC medication should be recorded in the patient's care notes.
- All care providers must ensure their staff are trained and have the required competencies to ensure safe and effective use of homely remedies and over the counter medicines for the management of self-limiting illness.
- Looked after children in foster care should have access to OTC medicines and appropriate advice on managing self-limiting illness under the supervision of a foster carer. Foster carers should seek expert advice on managing self-limiting illness for children in their care from their community pharmacy.