

Your Ref:
Our Ref: LS/NR
Contact: Lincoln Sargeant

Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire
Health and Adult Services, Public Health Team,
County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire,
DL7 8DD
Tel: (01609) 532476
E-Mail: lincoln.sargeant@northyorks.gov.uk
www.northyorks.gov.uk

To All North Yorkshire GP Practices

26 April 2016

Dear GP colleagues and Practice Managers

Prescribing of medicines as part of Smoking Cessation services in North Yorkshire

I am writing to clarify the arrangements for smoking cessation prescribing within primary care and to confirm that NYCC has an arrangement with CCGs where it pays for all prescribing activity for smoking cessation products (outlined in our formulary in Appendix 1).

As you will be aware, North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) has entered into a new commissioning arrangement with Solutions4Health (S4H). The new Service now branded "Smokefreelife North Yorkshire" took effect from 1st January 2016. Under this arrangement NYCC no longer contracts directly with GP practices to provide stop smoking services. However, Solutions4Health have offered GP practices 3 options for being part of the delivery mechanism for the new smoking cessation service. To date the majority of practices have signed up to an option. These options are:

- Option A – subcontract: in house service provision by the GP practice as a subcontractor of S4H (supplying NRT and varenicline directly to patients)
- Option B – S4H run clinics: delivered by S4H in the GP practice or nearby locality
- Option C – referral : GPs refer patients into S4H services (clients are seen by S4H at their sites or managed by telephone as appropriate)

In all three of these options, Practices are entering into a contractual arrangement with S4H which involves GPs agreeing to receive requests from S4H staff (a letter of recommendation) for the supply of pharmacotherapy (mainly for varenicline) for patients registered in their practice.

We are working with S4H and the Local Medical Committee to agree the protocols for the supply of pharmacotherapy so GPs can be confident when they receive a letter of recommendation that clients



have had a consultation with a stop smoking advisor where they have discussed options with clients and completed a checklist to assess whether a recommendation for GP prescription is appropriate.

Patients attending S4H clinics will be offered NRT by direct supply from that clinic and in these cases, no further requests to supply NRT will be made to the GP. The supply of varenicline for patients attending S4H run clinics will also be managed through a contractual arrangement between S4H and community pharmacy. Community pharmacists will be able to provide varenicline via a patient group direction (approved for use by NYCC).

However, there may be some patients who are excluded from varenicline supply under PGD, e.g. for clinical reasons. In this case, if clinically appropriate, a request may be made to the patient's GP to prescribe varenicline. As with any shared care type arrangement, the GP retains the right to decline to take on prescribing, for example on safety grounds.

As commissioners of the new service, North Yorkshire County Council wants to ensure that GP prescribing to support smoking cessation is done within a clear framework with appropriate clinical and financial governance of this activity. We are confident this can be achieved if each practice:

- 1) Enters into a contractual arrangement with S4H (options a, b, or c) where pharmacotherapy is supplied as part of the commissioned service.
- 2) Supply pharmacotherapy that complies with the formulary items as set out in Appendix 1 of this letter.

Therefore, NYCC would like to encourage all Practices to sign up to a contract with S4H.

I hope this letter clarifies the current situation regarding prescribing of medicines for smoking cessation. Please be assured that NYCC will cover the costs of all prescribing activity for smoking cessation (within our formulary). We are happy to have a discussion with GP practices where they are not signed up to a contract with S4H but feel they have a case for supplying pharmacotherapy. Similarly if GPs wish to use pharmacotherapy off formulary this should be discussed with NYCC before prescribing.

If you have any questions regarding the detail of this letter please contact Emma Davis (Health Improvement Manager) at NYCC Emma.Davis@northyorks.gov.uk or 01609 797154.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr Lincoln Sargeant, MBBS (Hons), MPH, DM, PhD, FFPH
Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire