Pharmacy First Referral Guide for General Practice











Patient Contacts the Practice

- Patient contacts the practice regarding a minor illness, or one of the seven common conditions supported by Pharmacy First. (sinusitis, sore throat, otitis media, infected insect bite, impetigo, shingles, or UTI in women)
- Check that the patient is eligible to be referred to the service (see aide memoir)
- Offer the patient a referral to the Pharmacy First Service (see Pharmacy First pack for tips when discussing the referral with the patient)

95% of Community Pharmacies in the North East and Yorkshire region are offering the service.

Making a referral - Local Services

- Click the Local Services button and select 'Pharmacy First'
- Click "Assess for referral" to follow the triage process which will ask some questions about the condition to ensure the patient is directed appropriately. If the patient is suitable, click 'continue' Note: it is possible to bypass the triage to make the referral (this stage is not compulsory)
- Add details and click create referral.
- A postcode search function for options of nearby pharmacies that are offering the service will be presented. The patient can choose the Pharmacy that is most convenient.
- The patient details will be populated. Add in referral reason and click 'create referral'

Making a referral rather than signposting reassures the patient and means they can be contacted if they do not attend the pharmacy for the consultation. It also ensures a safe transfer of care from General Practice to Community Pharmacy.

Consultation with the Pharmacist

- The patient attends the pharmacy for their consultation.
- The outcome of the consultation could be self-care advice, over the counter medicine, onward referral (e.g. to higher acuity setting) as required.
- For clinical pathways consultations (7 common conditions), certain prescription only medicines can be supplied only when appropriate
- The outcome of the consultation will be shared with the patient's GP via a post-event message. GP Connect Update Record will provide functionality for the GP record to be updated automatically (date TBC)

Data from the CPCS service evaluation showed that 9 out of 10 consultations are completed within the Community Pharmacy setting, without the need for onward referral.

NHS Pharmacy First – referrals for minor illnesses

Service suitability

The service is only for patients aged over 1 year.

CONDITIONS	What conditions are SUITABLE for referral to pharmacists?			Do NOT refer in these circumstances		
BITES/STINGS	Bee stingWasp sting	• Stings with minor redness	Stings with minor swelling	• Drowsy / fever • Fast heart rate	• Severe swellings or cramps	
COLDS	Cold soresCoughs	• Flu-like symptoms	• Sore throat	Lasted +3 weeksShortness of breath	Chest painUnable to swallow	
CONGESTION	• Blocked or runny nose	Constant need to clear their throat	• Excess mucus • Hay fever	Lasted +3 weeksShortness of breath	1 side obstructionFacial swelling	
EAR		• Ear wax • Blocked ear	• Hearing problems	Something may be in the ear canalDischarge	Severe pain.DeafnessVertigo	
EYE	• Eye, red or Irritable	• Eye, sticky • Eyelid problems	• Watery / runny eyes	Severe painPain 1 side only	• Light sensitivity • Reduced vision	
GASTRIC / BOWEL	Constipation Diarrhoea Infant colic	HeartburnIndigestion	 Haemorrhoids Rectal pain, Vomiting or nausea	Severe/ on-goingLasted +6 weeks	Patient +55 yearsBlood / Weight loss	
GENERAL	• Hay fever	· Sleep difficulties	•Tiredness	· Severe / on-going		
GYNAE/THRUSH	Cystitis Vaginal discharge	· Vaginal itch or soreness		Diabetic / PregnantUnder 16 / over 60Unexplained bleeding	 Pharmacy treatment not worked Had thrush 2x in last 6 months 	
PAIN	 Acute pain Ankle or foot pain Headache Hip pain or swelling Knee or leg pain 	Lower back painLower limb painMigraineShoulder pain	Sprains and strainsThigh or buttock painWrist, hand or finger pain	 Condition described as severe or urgent Conditions have been ongoing for +3 weeks 	Chest pain / pain radiating into the shoulder Pharmacy treatment not worked Sudden onset	
SKIN	 Acne, spots and pimples Athlete's foot Blisters on foot Dermatitis / dry skin Hair loss 	 Hay fever Nappy rash Oral thrush Rash - allergy Ringworm/ threadworm 	ScabiesSkin dressingsSkin rashWarts/verrucaeWound problems	 Condition described as severe or urgent Conditions have been ongoing for +3 weeks 	 Pharmacy treatment not worked Skin lesions / blisters with discharge Diabetes related? 	
MOUTH/THROAT	Cold sore blisters Flu-like symptoms Hoarseness	Mouth ulcers Sore mouth Sore throat	Oral thrushTeethingToothache	Lasted +10 daysSwollen painful gumsSores inside mouth	 Unable to swallow Patient has poor immune system Voice change 	
SWELLING	Ankle or foot swelling Lower limb swelling	Thigh or buttock swellingToe pain or swelling	Wrist, hand or finger swelling	 Condition described as severe or urgent Condition ongoing for +3 Ver weeks 	Discolouration to skinPharmacy treatment not	

Important:

Please note this slide is intended as a guide and has been adapted from a similar table used to support CPCS minor illness referrals from GP practices which now forms part of Pharmacy First along with the 7 Clinical Pathways.

Following referral for a minor illness the pharmacist will assess the patient and either

- support the patient through what was previously the minor illness pathway for CPCS.
- if necessary they will assess and check if the patient needs and can be supported through the 7 clinical pathways
- or if e.g. symptoms have deteriorated or red flags are identified, promptly escalate them to higher acuity support.

NHS Pharmacy First – 7 clinical pathways

Please note these are the main exclusions. Each pathway has additional specific clinical exclusions which will be considered by the community pharmacist during the consultation.

N.B. A link to the clinical pathways and the PGDs can be found here NHS England » Community Pharmacy advanced service specification: NHS Pharmacy First Service

Urinary tract infection	Shingles*	Impetigo	Infected insect bites	Acute sore throat	Acute sinusitis	Acute otitis media
A UTI is an infection in any part of the urinary system.	Shingles is an infection that causes a painful rash	Impetigo is a common infection of the skin. It is contagious, which means it can be passed on by touching.	Insect bites and stings can become infected or cause a reaction.	Sore throat is a symptom resulting from inflammation of the upper respiratory tract	Sinusitis is swelling of the sinuses, usually caused by an infection. The sinuses are small, empty spaces behind your cheekbones and forehead that connect to the inside of the nose.	An infection of the middle ear.
Inclusion: • Female • Aged between 16 - 64 • Suspected lower UTI	 Inclusion: 18 years and over Suspected case of shingles. Rash appeared within the last 72 hours - 7 days 	 Inclusion: 1 year and over Signs and symptoms of impetigo Localised (4 or fewer lesions/clusters present) 	 Inclusion: 1 year and over Infection that is present or worsening at least 48 hours after the initial bite(s) or sting(s) 	Inclusion:5 years and overSuspected sore throat	 Inclusion: 12 years and over Suspected signs and symptoms of sinusitis Symptom duration of 10 days or more 	 Inclusion: Aged between 1 – 17 Suspected signs and symptoms of acute otitis media
Exclusion: • Male • <16 or >64 • Pregnant • Breastfeeding • Recurrent UTI (2 in last 6 months or 3 in last 12 months) • Catheter • Type 1 or 2 Diabetic	 Exclusion: < under age of 18 Pregnant or suspected pregnancy Breastfeeding with shingle sores on the breasts Shingles rash onset over 7 days ago 	 Exclusion: < under 1 year of age Pregnancy or suspected pregnancy in individuals under 16 years of age Breastfeeding with impetigo lesion(s) present on the breast Recurrent impetigo (2 or more episodes in the same year) Widespread lesions/ clusters present Systemically unwell 	 Exclusion: < under 1 year of age Pregnancy or suspected pregnancy in individuals under 16 years of age Systemically unwell Bite or sting occurred while travelling outside the UK 	 Exclusion: Individuals under 5 years of age Pregnancy or suspected pregnancy in individuals under 16 years of age Recurrent sore throat/tonsillitis (7 or more significant episodes in the preceding 12 months or 5+ in each of the preceding 2 years, or 3+ in the preceding three years) Previous tonsillectomy 	 Exclusion: Individuals under 12 years of age Pregnancy or suspected pregnancy in individuals under 16 years of age Symptom duration of less than 10 days Recurrent sinusitis ((4 or more annual episodes of sinusitis) 	Exclusion: Individuals under 1 year of age or over 18 years of age Pregnancy or suspected pregnancy in individuals under 16 Recurrent infection (3+ episodes in preceding 6 months or 4+ episodes in the preceding 12 months with at least one episode in the past 6 months.)