**Pharmacy First FAQ’s**

Here are some questions that have been asked, in relation to Pharmacy First. We hope your community pharmacy teams find this helpful for your learning and understanding of the service.

1. **If a patient presents with an itchy rash which I diagnose as scabies – should I prescribe 1 x 30g tube of permethrin or 2 x 30g tubes for the complete treatment? Will I be paid for 2 tubes?**

**Answer :** You should prescribe 2 x 30g tubes of permethrin in this situation. This is what will be required by the patient in most cases to complete the course of treatment. If you choose to only prescribe one tube, there is the risk the patient will not return for the second tube resulting in incomplete treatment, therefore the scabies infection is not resolved.

Below is a guide to what is required for patients who present with scabies, and close contacts.

If you wish to update your knowledge around the treatment of scabies, please follow this link:

<https://www.pcds.org.uk/clinical-guidance/scabies>

**Prescribing quantities per treatment course (\*some cream may be left over- only 30g tube permitted on PF):**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Patient group** | **Symptomatic i.e Two treatments** | **Close contact i.e. one treatment** |
| Adults, the elderly & children over 12 years | Two tubes (Up to one tube 30g per application).  Some adults may need four tubes for full body coverage (Some adults may need two tubes (60g) for full body coverage per application). | One tube  Some adults may need two tubes for full body coverage |
| Children 6 to 12 years | One tube (Up to half a tube (15g) per application). | One tube |
| Children 1 to 5 years | One tube (Up to a quarter of a tube (7.5g) per application). | One tube |
| Children 2 months to 1 year | One tube (Up to an eighth of a tube (3.75g) per application). | One tube |

(Information from EMC- <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/files/pil.15508.pdf> )

Please note, you must prescribe this as 2 x***30g size*** tubes- as this is the size permitted on the Pharmacy First formulary.

1. **If a patient presents in the pharmacy with no visible signs of a scabies rash, but say they are a close contact of a patient with diagnosed scabies, can I supply them with permethrin cream? How many tubes?**

**Answer:** Yes, you should supply this patient with 1 x30g permethrin cream. As per treatment guidelines, close contacts will only require one treatment.

***NB: The scabies guidance is currently being reviewed, we will send further detail once this process is completed.***

1. **If I supply a medication that has been prescribed to a patient via prescription and give them advice around side effects and what to do if they don’t improve, can I claim this as a patient consultation or GP referral via Pharmacy First?**

Answer: No, you should not claim for payment for this interaction. This does not fall within the Pharmacy First service specification.

1. **In the Pharmacy First approved list – is the pack size listed the maximum amount of the medication we can prescribe and supply to the patient?**

Answer: No, the pack size listed in the approved list is the pack size you must supply in order to be remunerated. The total quantity supplied will depend on the minor illness you are treating, it is up to the pharmacist to decide the appropriate course of action based on treatment guidelines. You should supply enough to complete the course of treatment, or the quantity you deem appropriate as a trial with safety netting and worsening statement advice given to the patient on the treatment plan going forward.

Following on from our communications to community pharmacies around the inappropriate use usage of Pharmacy First, we have issued an update to GP practices around Pharmacy First. When having conversations with your local teams, please refer to this guidance document that was updated in April 2024, used for signposting from GP practices:

[https://www.publications.scot.nhs.uk/files/nhs-pharmacy-first-scotland-202404.pdf](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.publications.scot.nhs.uk%2Ffiles%2Fnhs-pharmacy-first-scotland-202404.pdf&data=05%7C02%7Ccraig.marr%40nhs.scot%7C694d7bedb8434e5ac8c008dc9c01a172%7C10efe0bda0304bca809cb5e6745e499a%7C0%7C0%7C638556778010348506%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=jLkShE6LVLGpeyrLo3VhK4ANeu3M%2Bm2URiv0qUTsVtQ%3D&reserved=0)

**FAQ’s:**

1. ***If a patient comes in and asks for something on Pharmacy First for dry skin, should I refuse to supply this because they asked for Pharmacy First?***

*No, you shouldn't refuse to supply this. The pharmacy should be using their professional judgement in these scenarios. If a patient asks for something on Pharmacy First - the person who is speaking with them should start from the beginning of a consultation, assess the symptoms/duration/other products tried etc and find out if there is a product available on Pharmacy First that would be clinically appropriate to supply in this way. All consultations should start with a symptom - so staff should start the consultation, and find out if this method of supply is appropriate for the patient - the correct first line product could be only available as an OTC purchase, or a product via Pharmacy First.*

1. ***If a patient comes in and asks for something on Pharmacy First because the surgery told them to come to us to get something on Pharmacy First, should I refuse supply?***

*As above, no, you shouldn't refuse to supply this. Follow the process detailed in the above question - carry out a consultation, and chose the most clinically appropriate option for the patient - this may be OTC purchase or a product via Pharmacy First.*

1. ***If a patient needs a product via Pharmacy First, but I only have a smaller pack size in stock (not the size on the Pharmacy First formulary) - can I supply the smaller pack?***

*No, unless you wish to sell the product as an OTC purchase. You will not be paid for pack sizes that are not listed on the Pharmacy First formulary - these will be rejected at practitioner services.*

**Learning Point**

Please ensure you always select the correct pack size when issuing a product via the Pharmacy First service. There has been an increase in the number of rejected products over the past 6 months, which is causing a considerable amount of extra work for practitioner services.