

SOME WORDS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN PRESCRIBING AND HEALTHCARE

If you're searching for something specific, you can use Ctrl f and start typing the word into the navigation box.

National

CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group. Each one looks after the health needs of their local population
DH	Department of Health
NHS England (NHSE)	NHSE commissions hospitals to provide very specialist services e.g liver transplant, cancer
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence . Source of evidence-based guidelines and appraisals
NICE TA	NICE technology appraisal. Clinical and cost-effectiveness reviews of medicines and devices. Commissioners of health care have to comply with these, usually within 3 months of publication
NICE CG	NICE clinical guideline. Designed to prevent ill health and improve quality of care and services

Local

SCG	Shared care guideline. Hospital starts a medicine and GP practice takes over prescribing and any monitoring specified in the SCG. Some people call them SCPs – shared care protocols
RAG	Red, amber, green traffic light system for classifying medicines and giving guidance on who can prescribe. Red – responsibility for prescribing stays with the consultant or specialist clinician. Amber – responsibility for prescribing may transfer from hospital to GP practice. Green with specialist initiation means medicine is started by consultant or specialist clinician. Once the prescriber in the GP practice has enough information and support they can take over prescribing. Green means medicine can be started and maintained in any care setting. Also black category – medicines not commissioned locally e.g co-proxamol
TLS	Traffic light system used to group medicines according to what sort of organisation can prescribe
Commissioning statements	These publications cover medicines which CCGs do not routinely commission or can only be used under certain circumstances
DROP-list	"Drugs to Review for Optimised Prescribing". Medicines less suitable for prescribing. We use a national list from PrescQIPP

To do with medicines

Medicine/medicinal product/drug	A substance used to prevent or treat disease or help to make a diagnosis
Names of medicine	Medicines can have two names: proprietary name (brand name or trade name) and a generic name. The proprietary name is the intellectual property of the manufacturer. The name and the medicine are initially covered by a patent. This is a legal arrangement which prevents other manufacturers from making or selling the same medicine for a number of years. Once the medicine loses patent protection other people can make a similar product, called a generic version. The word 'generic' can also be used to mean the non-proprietary name of a

	medicine
Medical device	An instrument or appliance used to diagnose, prevent, monitor or treat a disease or used to help people with a handicap. Some devices are used for contraception (birth control)
Indication	What a medicine is used for, based on results from clinical trials
EMA	European Medicines Authority . This looks at the evidence of safety and effectiveness for new medicines and new indications for existing medicines. Approved medicines are given a product licence or marketing authorisation
MHRA	Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency . This looks at the safety and effectiveness of medicines, mainly generic versions of medicines or ones only being marketed in the UK
MA	Marketing authorisation. Medicines which have gone through a regulatory process (European or UK) will have a product licence or marketing authorisation
PL	Product licence. Medicines which have gone through a regulatory process (European or UK) will have a product licence or marketing authorisation
Unlicensed medicine	Some medicines are imported into the UK and are not licensed in this country, we call these unlicensed
Off-label use	A medicine used for an indication that it is not licensed for
Special	If a licensed medicine is not available, a prescriber can write a prescription for a special – something made to order
▼	Black triangle medicine – one which is subject to additional monitoring. This system is used to quickly identify new safety information about a medicine. The black triangle appears next to the name of a medicine until the safety of the medicine is well established. A black triangle with a star (▼*) can be added to well established medicines if the regulator is monitoring safety concerns for a new indication or patient group
Contra-indication	A medical condition which stops a patient from having a particular medicine
PIL	Patient information leaflet for medicines. Available from Electronic medicines compendium and MHRA
SPC	Summary of product characteristics. Includes indication, dose, side effects etc of medicines. Electronic medicines compendium contains SPCs for most medicines available in the UK. Some SPCs for generic medicines are available from the MHRA
SE, S/E, ADR	Side effect or adverse drug reaction. Untoward reactions to medicines
DI	Drug interaction. One medicine increases or decreases the effect of another. Can also have interactions with food or drink e.g grapefruit
TTO/TTA	To take out or to take away. Medicines given to a patient when they leave a hospital ward
FP10	Name of prescriptions issued by GPs
SLS	Some medicines can only be provided for a nationally approved list of conditions called the selective list scheme. The prescription has to be endorsed SLS if a prescriber is issuing it for a condition on this list
ACBS	Some food and toilet products can only be prescribed for a nationally agreed list of conditions. The list is put together by the Advisory Committee on Borderline Substances
MO	Medicines Optimisation
Antibiotics	Used to treat or prevent some types of bacterial infections. They work by killing bacteria or preventing them from spreading. Antibiotics aren't effective against viral infections, such as the common cold, flu, most coughs and sore throats
AMR	Antimicrobial resistance . This happens when microbes that cause infection survive treatment with a medicine which would normally kill them or stop their growth
AMS	Antimicrobial stewardship means the appropriate use of antibiotics to keep their effectiveness in the future. Lots of resources are available. For example antimicrobial stewardship from NICE

Antibiotic Guardian	Sign up to be an Antibiotic Guardian here
Polypharmacy	When a patient is on lots of medication
Excipient	Pharmaceutical preparations contain one or more active ingredient(s) plus excipients e.g lactose, colouring, flavouring. Lactose is used to bulk out most tablets
POM	Prescription-only medicine. Medicine which can only be issued on a prescription
P	Pharmacy medicine - only available through a registered pharmacy
GSL	General sales list. Medicines which can be sold in shops other than pharmacies
OTC	Over the counter. Medicines which do not need a prescription (not a legal term, unlike POM, P and GSL)
Effervescent	Medicine which dissolves to make a fizzy liquid
Injection	Medicine given via a syringe and needle
Infusion	This is usually a larger volume than an injection. Given into a vein or under the skin
Dispersible	Medicine which is dispersed in liquid before taking
PO	Administration of a medicine by mouth
IV	Intravenous injection or infusion into a vein
IM	Intramuscular injection into a muscle
SC	Sub-cutaneous injection into the skin. Also called sub cut
S/L	Sub-lingual administration of a medicine under the tongue
Nebule	Medicine delivered to the lungs using a nebuliser
Transdermal	Patches or gel applied to the skin
Topical	Medicine applied to the skin, nose, back passage, eye etc
Per rectum	Medicine given via the back passage via a suppository or enema
Suppository	Used to administer medicines via the back passage
Enema	Liquid medicine administered via the back passage
Intra-articular	Injection into a joint
Intradermal	Injection into the first layers of skin
Epidural	Injection into a space in the vertebrae of the back
PEG	Percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy. Used to feed people who cannot have food by mouth
NG	Nasogastric. Tube through the nose into the stomach to administer feeds or medicines
EC	Enteric coated -stops tablets dissolving in the stomach
M/R	Modified-release preparations. Delays the start of the effect of the medicine. Or used to get medicines to parts of the gastro-intestinal tract further than the stomach
P/R	Prolonged-release preparations. These are used to deliver the medicine over a long time
U	Units (a measurement of strength of a pharmaceutical preparation)
IU	International units (a measurement of strength of a pharmaceutical preparation)
PFS	Pre-filled syringe – allows patients to self-administer an injection
Inhaler	A device which enables administration of a medicine to the lungs
MDI	Metered-dose inhaler. An aerosol type inhaler
DPI	Dry powder inhaler
Spacer	Device used to make it easier to use inhalers
SF	Sugar-free
GF	Gluten-free
FC	Film-coated tablets
Amp	Ampoule – glass container for injections
Vaccine	A product which leads to you becoming protected from a disease (you become immune)
Immunisation	The process in the body by which you become protected from a disease
MMR	Measles, mumps and rubella vaccine

OPAT	Out-patient antibiotic treatment (intravenous antibiotics given away from a hospital ward)
CD	Controlled drug. Use controlled through the Misuse of Drugs Regulations
Antagonist	A medicine which works against something. Blocks an effect in the body e.g beta-blocker
Agonist	The opposite of a blocker. A medicine which works to start a response e.g beta-agonist
Receptor	Medicines activate or block body systems via receptors in the body. Receptors are protein molecules in the body. Beta-blockers work via beta receptors
EBM	Evidence-based medicine
RCT	Randomised controlled trial. The best kind of evidence for a medicine. Patients are put into treatment or comparator groups on a random basis. Lower levels of evidence come from observational studies. Patients are not randomised to these studies. Observational studies include case-controlled and cohort studies
SR	Systematic review. A published literature search of all the evidence for a medicine put together in one paper
MA	Meta-analysis. Using all the data from a systematic review, data from clinical trials are added together

Types of medicines

ACE inhibitor	Angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitor. Names end in 'pril' e.g ramipril
ARB	Angiotensin receptor blocker also called angiotensin II receptor antagonists. Names end in 'sartan' e.g candesartan
DMARD	Disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drug for conditions like rheumatoid arthritis e.g methotrexate
b-DMARD	Biological disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drug e.g vedolizumab. This type of biologic medicine is made using very complex biological processes
Anti-TNF α	A medicine which works against tissue necrosis factor alpha e.g certolizumab
SSRI	Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor e.g fluoxetine (Prozac®)
TCA	Tricyclic antidepressant e.g amitriptyline
PPI	Proton-pump inhibitor. Names end in 'prazole' e.g omeprazole
Beta-blocker	Names end in 'lol' e.g propranolol
Macrolide antibiotic	Names end in 'mycin' e.g erythromycin
DPP-4 inhibitors (gliptins)	Dipeptidylpeptidase-4 inhibitors. Names end in 'gliptin' e.g saxagliptin
GLP-1	Glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonist. Names end in 'tide' e.g liraglutide
SGLT2 inhibitors	Sodium glucose co-transported 2 inhibitors. Names end in 'gliflozin' e.g dapagliflozin
SU	Sulphonylurea e.g gliclazide
LMWH	Low molecular weight heparin. Names end in 'parin' e.g dalteparin
DOACs/NOACs	New name is DOACs – direct oral anticoagulants e.g dabigatran. Used to be called NOACs – novel (or new) oral anticoagulants. Used in a similar way to warfarin
HMG CoA reductase inhibitors	Statins e.g simvastatin
GnRH	Gonadorelin-releasing hormone e.g goserelin
GH	Growth hormone. Also called somatropin
HRT	Hormone replacement therapy
COC	Combined oral contraceptive (birth control)

POP	Progestogen-only pill (birth control)
CHC	Combined hormonal contraceptive (birth control)
IUS	Intrauterine system – type of contraceptive (birth control)
IUD	Intrauterine device (coil)
NSAID	Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory e.g ibuprofen
IG	Immunoglobulin
LA	Local anaesthetic
GA	General anaesthetic
Beta ₂ -agonist	To relieve shortness of breath. Can be short or long-acting e.g salbutamol or salmeterol
ICS	Inhaled corticosteroid e.g beclometasone
Triptans	Names end in triptan e.g sumatriptan
ISMN	Isosorbide mononitrate
ISDN	Isosorbide dinitrate

To do with medical conditions and the body

Gastric	To do with the stomach
Cerebral	To do with the brain
Cardiac	To do with the heart
Renal	To do with the kidneys
Hepatic	To do with the liver
Dermal/dermatology	To do with the skin
Haematological	To do with the blood
Rheumatology	To do with joints
Pulmonary	To do with the lungs
Biliary	To do with bile
Urinary	To do with urine (wee)
Circulatory	To do with the system that moves blood around the body. System includes heart and blood vessels
Audiology	To do with hearing
Gynaecology	To do with diseases of the women's reproductive system
Gastroenterology	To do with diseases of the stomach, bowel and liver
Neurology	To do with diseases of the brain and nerves
Orthopaedics	To do with bones
Podiatry	To do with foot health
Respiratory	To do with diseases of the lungs
Urology	To do with diseases of the bladder and our plumbing system
Endocrinology	To do with diseases of the glands
Haematology	To do with diseases of blood
Ophthalmology	To do with diseases of the eye
SALT	Speech and language therapy
GI	Gastro-intestinal
GIT	Gastro-intestinal tract
UC	Ulcerative colitis
IBD	Irritable bowel disease
IBS	Irritable bowel syndrome
GORD	Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease
CVS	Cardiovascular system
CVD	Cardiovascular disease

CHD	Coronary heart disease
CAD	Coronary artery disease
AF	Atrial fibrillation
MI	Myocardial infarction/heart attack
CABG	Coronary artery bypass graft
DVT	Deep vein thrombosis
VTE	Venous thromboembolism
CVA	Cerebrovascular accident (type of stroke)
TIA	Transient ischaemic attack
ACS	Acute coronary syndrome
CPR	Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
COPD	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
CF	Cystic fibrosis
PE	Pulmonary embolism
CNS	Central nervous system
MH	Mental health
LD	Learning difficulties
AD	Alzheimer's disease
MS	Multiple sclerosis
PD	Parkinson's disease
CBT	Cognitive behavioural therapy
ADHD	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
CFS/ME	Chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis
GUM	Genito-urinary medicine
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
STI	Sexually transmitted infection
UTI	Urinary tract infection
C. diff	<i>Clostridium difficile</i>
TB	Tuberculosis
DM	Diabetes
T1DM	Type 1 diabetes
T2DM	Type 2 diabetes
AKI	Acute kidney injury
CKD	Chronic kidney disease
MSK	Musculoskeletal
RA	Rheumatoid arthritis
OA	Osteoarthritis
AS	Ankylosing spondylitis
PA	Psoriatic arthritis
RSI	Repetitive strain injury
SLE	Systemic lupus erythematosus
ENT	Eyes, nose, throat
OME	Otitis media with effusion
AMD	Age-related macular degeneration
GU	Genito-urinary
OAB	Over-active bladder syndrome
PID	Pelvic inflammatory disease
PCOS	Polycystic ovary syndrome
IVF	In-vitro fertilisation
ED	Erectile dysfunction
Lactation	Breast-feeding
BP	Blood pressure

LFT	Liver function test
HbA _{1c}	Haemoglobin A _{1c} – a measure of long-term diabetes control
INR	International normalised ratio, measured in patients who take warfarin
IOP	Intra-ocular pressure, measured in patients with glaucoma
PSA	Prostate specific antigen – test for prostate problems
BMD	Bone mineral density – used to identify osteoporosis. Measured using a DEXA scan
BMI	Body mass index
QoL	Quality of life. Can be measured using questionnaires
EoL	End of life
CT	Computed tomography. A type of scan to see inside the body
MRI	Magnetic resonance imaging. A type of scan to see inside the body
US	Ultrasound. A type of scan to see inside the body
Hg	Haemoglobin
Ag	Silver
Ki	Potassium
Na	Sodium
Fe	Iron
Li	Lithium
Mg	Magnesium
BP	A medicine made to the standard in the British Pharmacopoeia
BPC	A medicine made to the standard in the British Pharmaceutical Codex
EP	A medicine made to the standard in the European Pharmacopoeia

People and places

Pharmacist	Works in a chemist's (community pharmacy), hospital pharmacy, pharmaceutical industry, GP practice, CCG etc
MMT	Medicines Management Team. A team of people who support GP practices to prescribe safely, effectively and cost-effectively. Some CCG teams are called MMTs, some are called MOTs – medicines optimisation teams
Appliance contractor	Can dispense prescriptions for catheters and stoma products etc. Companies include SALTS or Bard
NMP	Non-medical prescriber e.g nurse or pharmacist who have undergone extra training to allow them to prescribe without direct supervision of a doctor
HCP	Health care professional
TVN	Tissue viability nurse
HV	Health visitor
DN	District nurse
PN	Practice Nurse
PM	Practice manager
GPwSI	GP with a specialist interest. Does some clinics in hospital as well as being a GP
RMH	Registered mental health nurse
DSN	Diabetic specialist nurse
MDT	Multi-disciplinary team

NHS Choices has further information about [medical conditions and treatments](#).

Health information is available from the [Patient](#) website.

The South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust's [website](#) includes information on mental health conditions, treatments and medications.