

Guidance on prescribing medicines

Standard 7.1 of *Standards for the Dental Team* states:

‘You must provide good quality care based on current evidence and authoritative guidance’

Prescribing medicines is an integral aspect of many treatment plans. You must make an appropriate assessment of your patient’s condition, prescribe within your competence and keep accurate records.

You must have an understanding of your patient’s current health and medication, including any relevant medical history, in order to prescribe medicines safely. If in doubt, you should contact the patient’s General Medical Practitioner (GP) or other appropriate healthcare professional.

Under the various National Health Service (and equivalent) Regulations in the UK dentists can prescribe certain medicines to NHS patients. These are listed in the respective Drug Tariff documents for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and in the List of Dental Preparations in the British National Formulary.

A dentist can prescribe any medicine from the British National Formulary (BNF) on a private prescription; however you must only prescribe medicines to meet the identified dental needs of your patients. Hygienists and therapists can independently supply or administer certain medicines for their patients’ dental needs under Patient Group Directions. Clinical dental technicians, dental technicians, dental nurses and orthodontic therapists are not able to supply or administer medicines without the prescription of a dentist.

You must **not** prescribe medicines for yourself.

Part of prescribing medicines responsibly means prescribing only where you are able to form an objective view of your patient’s health and clinical needs. If you prescribe medicines for someone with whom you have a close personal relationship you may not be able to remain objective and you could overlook serious problems, encourage addiction, or interfere with treatment provided by other healthcare professionals. Other than in emergencies, you should not prescribe medicines for anyone with whom you have a close personal relationship.

You should only use remote means to prescribe medicines for dental patients if there is no other viable option and it is in their best interests.

Dentists are the only registrants who can prescribe Botox™. Dentists must not remote prescribe (for example via telephone, email, or a website) for non-surgical cosmetic procedures such as the prescription or administration of Botox or injectable cosmetic medicinal products.

Effective from 30 September 2013