

# Medicines

## Optimisation intervention brief

### Medicines Optimisation Incentive Scheme 18/19- Items of limited clinical effectiveness

<b>TITLE?</b>
ILCE 1.1 Deprescribe all probiotics
<b>WHAT?</b>
In March 2018 NHS England <sup>1</sup> made the following recommendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Probiotics should not be routinely prescribed in primary care due to limited evidence of clinical effectiveness.</li> </ul>
<b>WHY?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is currently insufficient clinical evidence to support prescribing of probiotics within the NHS for the treatment or prevention of diarrhoea of any cause.<sup>1</sup></li> <li>Both the Public Health England C.difficile guidance<sup>2</sup> and NICE CG 84<sup>3</sup> advise that probiotics cannot be recommended currently and that “Good quality randomised controlled trials should be conducted in the UK to evaluate the effectiveness and safety of a specific probiotic using clearly defined treatment regimens and outcome measures before they are routinely prescribed”.</li> </ul>
<b>WHO?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All patients prescribed a probiotic</li> </ul>
<b>TIPS?</b>
When this guidance was originally issued certain probiotics were listed in the Drug Tariff as borderline substances (ACBS), for the maintenance of antibiotic induced remission of ileoanal pouchitis in adults. This entry has since been removed and probiotics are no longer included in the Drug Tariff for any indication.
<b>HOW?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Search for all patients prescribed a probiotic, e.g. VSL#3, Viomox</li> <li>Agree with the practice how this will be approached with relevant patients. A Patient Information Leaflet is available to aid the discussion.</li> <li>Once agreed, remove item from repeat prescription list for each patient and add explanatory note to the patient consultation record.</li> </ul>
<b>SO WHAT?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NHS England guidance implemented.</li> </ul>
<b>FURTHER INFORMATION</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs. NHS England March 2018 <a href="https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf">https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf</a></li> <li><a href="#">Updated guidance on the management and treatment of Clostridium difficile infection</a>. Public Health England. May 2013</li> <li>NICE CG84: Diarrhoea and vomiting caused by gastroenteritis in under 5s: diagnosis and management. <a href="https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg84">https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg84</a></li> <li>Link to <a href="#">PIL</a></li> </ol>

