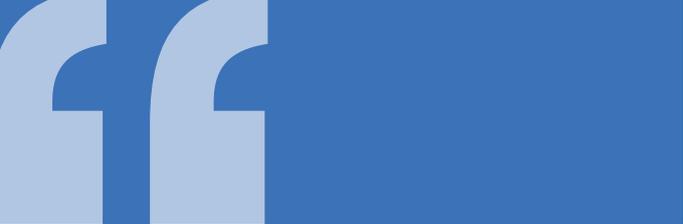


DON'T SWALLOW UP YOUR NHS



Drugs like paracetamol can cost up to three times more on prescription than from a supermarket. Please, buy them over the counter for pennies instead.



If I have a headache or a cold my first thought is to buy medication from my local pharmacy or supermarket. I personally wouldn't go to my doctors for headache and cold remedies as I'm taking up an appointment that could be used to treat someone really poorly.

Samantha, Ripon

Some patients do require large quantities of painkillers on prescription but the majority of us should be taking greater responsibility for the NHS by purchasing painkillers cheaply on the high street for the most common ailments.

Emma, Harrogate

Too many people feel it is their right to have free medicines even if it is just for paracetamol. People don't realise that by draining the NHS now of valuable resources there will be nothing left for future generations.

Christopher, Harrogate

I would rather pay a few pence for paracetamol/ibuprofen and leave the NHS to pay for more serious illnesses.

Angela, Harrogate

NHS funding should prioritise those in need, not give free prescriptions to those who can afford them.

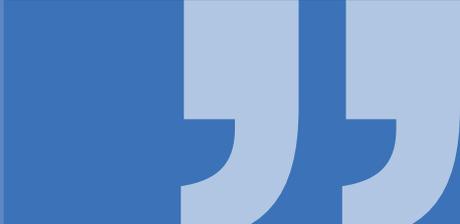
Michael, Knaresborough

It is imperative that WE, the public take a vested interest in OUR NHS. If me buying my own paracetamol or ibuprofen helps make savings and makes way for important medicine and treatment for things like Alzheimer's and cancer, I'm happy to do that.

Maggie, Killinghall

We need to help in anyway so we can keep our NHS.

Susan, Birstwith



Did you know your local NHS spends around £900,000 paying for medicines that patients in Harrogate and the rural district get free on prescription which could be bought over the counter for pennies? We believe this money could be better spent on essential healthcare services that benefit everyone.

Meeting everyone's healthcare needs

NHS Harrogate and Rural District Clinical Commissioning Group is responsible for planning and buying your local health services. This includes paying for the medication patients in the Harrogate and surrounding area get on prescription.

In 2015–16 we had a prescribing budget of £25.6 million.

Demand for services is rising and there are many pressures that threaten to overwhelm your local NHS: our population is ageing; we are seeing a growth in the number of people with long-term conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and hypertension; a large increase in the number of

free prescriptions given out, and rapidly rising medicine costs.

We are looking at how we can do things differently, so we have made changes to how we prescribe some medicines that can easily be bought at a supermarket or chemist. We think these are common sense changes that will help to bring down our prescription spend without impacting on your health and care.

The NHS belongs to everyone and to protect its financial stability and future for our children and grandchildren we need to make important changes to how we deliver and use health and care services.



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Buy over the counter for pennies instead

There are a wide range of prescription items, just as effective, that are available at your local chemist or supermarket at a cheaper cost to the NHS than it is for your doctor to prescribe.

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Last year we spent over £285,000 on dispensing painkillers alone. Painkillers such as paracetamol are widely available in supermarkets and local chemists and cost around 1p per tablet compared to 3p per tablet on the NHS. This is why, when you only need them now and

again, it is better to buy over the counter for pennies instead.

Getting medicine you can buy over the counter on prescription is much more expensive due to your doctor's and local pharmacist's time taken in dealing with appointments, handling prescriptions and dispensing medication. Where clinically appropriate, with certain items on prescriptions, your doctor will now encourage you to purchase them yourself at your local chemist or supermarket.

These types of items include:

- Painkillers (small quantities of paracetamol and ibuprofen)
- Cough and cold remedies
- Antihistamines (used to treat allergic health conditions)
- Nasal sprays
- Indigestion remedies
- Dandruff remedies
- Head lice remedies
- Haemorrhoids (piles) medication
- Teething remedies



We all have an individual responsibility to look after ourselves, improve our physical and mental wellbeing and change how we use NHS services. This is why, when you only need items now and again, it is better to buy over the counter for pennies instead.

Long-term pain management

We understand that many of you with long-term conditions are prescribed painkillers regularly to help you manage your pain.

We appreciate how beneficial and healing this is for you, so do not worry, you can still get regular large quantities on a repeat prescription. However please don't stock-pile these, only order what you need.

Living with pain can be tough for you, your family and friends. You may like to consider alternatives to help reduce your medication. We offer self-management courses that help you to understand and better manage persistent pain and its effects through relaxation, mindfulness and gentle exercise.

Help us to help you

Part of our drive to change the way we do things includes helping you to help yourself self-care by looking after yourself and being prepared.

Self-care is being able to self-manage symptoms such as coughs, colds, fever, aches and pains straight away. Not only does this improve your quality of life, it helps you sleep better and reduce stress, making you feel more positive and confident in taking control of your own health and wellbeing.

The best way to self-care is to be prepared for yourself and your family. Keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home will prepare you for some of the most common illnesses so you can treat them immediately, when needed, without having to wait to see your doctor. Your local pharmacist can give you advice on what to have available that you can easily buy from your chemist or supermarket.

Contact us

If you would like to know more or require this document in an alternative format or language, please contact us.

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