# **Weight Loss Medicines - FAQ**

# **Weight Loss Medicines – Frequently Asked Questions for Patients/Public**

The ICB has created a public-facing webpage – FAQs.

[Weight Management in Humber and North Yorkshire - Let's Get Better](https://letsgetbetter.co.uk/weight-management/)

We encourage all healthcare providers (GP Practices, Community Pharmacies, Trusts, etc.) in the Humber and North Yorkshire integrated care system to link directly to this resource.

We will update this resource on a regular basis, with new information, as it becomes available.

# **Weight Loss Medicines – Frequently Asked Questions for Clinicians/NHS Providers**

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## Introduction

We are aware of the increasing demand for weight loss drugs, both via the NHS and the high proportion of patients who are accessing these medicines through a variety of private routes.

We have pulled together this resource pack for clinicians covering a variety of frequently asked questions. This information should be used as a reference/ resource when needed.

## Supply via the NHS – Different Sources of Information

There are several sources of information about what can be prescribed, who can prescribe it and who they can prescribe it for, for example, the licensed indication, the NICE Technology Appraisal and the NHS England interim commissioning guidance.

All are correct and true, but for Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care System, we ask that clinicians working in NHS services follow the [NHSE Interim Commissioning Guidance](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/interim-commissioning-guidance-implementation-of-the-nice-technology-appraisal-ta1026-and-the-nice-funding-variation-for-tirzepatide-mounjaro-for-the-management-of-obesity/) and local HNY Area Prescribing Committee formulary position.

This will need to be followed for each drug AND for each indication.

### HNY ICB Commissioning Position

* *Tirzepatide (all strengths) pre-filled pen devices for subcutaneous injection for overweight and obesity is approved as 'red-specialist use only', as part of an ICB-approved commissioned service. Tirzepatide is only commissioned for patients, as per the* [*NHSE interim commissioning guidance*](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.england.nhs.uk%2Fpublication%2Finterim-commissioning-guidance-implementation-of-the-nice-technology-appraisal-ta1026-and-the-nice-funding-variation-for-tirzepatide-mounjaro-for-the-management-of-obesity%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cl.angus%40nhs.net%7C6428d72741f9450871df08ddaf1a358e%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638859249293685899%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=BTaH%2FsXI1kjwomOwW2qOWwS%2F0igj48HSl3Qn8bzLrPk%3D&reserved=0) *in year 1, who have a BMI ≥ 40\*\* and ≥ 4 'qualifying' comorbidities: hypertension, dyslipidaemia, obstructive sleep apnoea, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes.*

*Patients must qualify at the point of entry into NHS services.*

*Patients should only be prescribed tirzepatide for overweight and obesity if they meet the above criteria, and it should only be prescribed by the approved commissioned service. It should not be prescribed for overweight and obesity outside the approved commissioned service.*

*\*\* Use a lower BMI threshold (usually reduced by 2.5 kg/m2 ) for people from South Asian, Chinese, other Asian, Middle Eastern, Black African or African-Caribbean ethnic backgrounds\*\**

* Semaglutide for overweight and obesity may be prescribed by Tier 3 weight management services only.
* All GLP-1s can be used for type-2 diabetes (not overweight and obesity) in line with the [HNY Type 2 diabetes algorithm](https://humberandnorthyorkshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/HNY-Type-2-Diabetes-Algorithm-Final-Approved-by-IPMOC.pdf)

**A summary of this information is available as a separate summary table document.**

We have yet to finalise the ICB-approved commissioned service. Further commissioning information will follow regarding the commissioning of these medicines in primary care for overweight and obesity. Any updates in the commissioning of these medicines will be unambiguous and communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

We ask all NHS Clinicians working within NHS Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care System to only prescribe GLP-1 medicines (on the NHS) in line with the local commissioning arrangements.

### NICE Technology Appraisals (for overweight and obesity)

### NICE TA – Semaglutide (as Wegovy)

**[Semaglutide for managing overweight and obesity - NICE TA 875](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta875)**

Semaglutide is recommended as an option for weight management, including weight loss and weight maintenance, alongside a reduced-calorie diet and increased physical activity in adults, only if:

* it is used for a maximum of 2 years, and within a specialist weight management service providing multidisciplinary management of overweight or obesity (including but not limited to tiers 3 and 4), and
* they have at least 1 weight-related comorbidity and:
  + a body mass index (BMI) of at least 35.0 kg/m2, or
  + a BMI of 30.0 kg/m2 to 34.9 kg/m2 and meet the criteria for referral to specialist overweight and obesity management services in [NICE's guideline on overweight and obesity management](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng246/chapter/Discussing-results-and-referral).

Use lower BMI thresholds (usually reduced by 2.5 kg/m2) for people from South Asian, Chinese, other Asian, Middle Eastern, Black African or African-Caribbean family backgrounds.

Wegovy is NOT suitable for prescribing in primary care (any setting of primary care) on the NHS for overweight and obesity. Wegovy® should NOT be prescribed on the NHS for overweight and obesity, in primary care, unless otherwise advised to do so.

### NICE TA Tirzepatide (Mounjaro)

[**Tirzepatide for managing overweight and obesity – NICE TA 1026**](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta1026)

Tirzepatide (Mounjaro®) is recommended by NICE TA1026 for managing obesity alongside a reduced calorie diet and increased physical activity in adults, only if they have:

* + an initial body mass index (BMI) of at least 35 kg/m2 \*; and
  + at least 1 weight-related comorbidity.

\*Use a lower BMI threshold (usually reduced by 2.5 kg/m2 ) for people from South Asian, Chinese, other Asian, Middle Eastern, Black African or African-Caribbean ethnic backgrounds. Tirzepatide (Mounjaro®) is recommended by NICE for use in primary care settings and specialist weight management services.

### NHS Interim Commissioning Guidance – Tirzepatide Only

Due to the significant demand, NHS England has put in place an interim commissioning guidance for the implementation of the NICE TA 1026 – tirzepatide for managing overweight and obesity.

The NHSE interim commissioning guidance is [here](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/interim-commissioning-guidance-implementation-of-the-nice-technology-appraisal-ta1026-and-the-nice-funding-variation-for-tirzepatide-mounjaro-for-the-management-of-obesity/).

In summary, Mounjaro® should NOT be prescribed on the NHS in primary care, for overweight and obesity unless otherwise advised to do so.

It can only be prescribed on the NHS as part of a commissioned service AND if the patient meets the funding criteria. The funding criteria is nationally set and more restrictive than the NICE TA criteria.

In year 1 of the rollout, June 2025 onwards, this is BMI ≥ 40\* and ≥ 4 'qualifying' comorbidities. The qualifying co-morbidities are: hypertension, dyslipidaemia, obstructive sleep apnoea, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes.

\*Use lower BMI thresholds (usually reduced by 2.5 kg/m2) for people from South Asian, Chinese, other Asian, Middle Eastern, Black African or African-Caribbean family backgrounds.

### Licensed Indications

In the UK, the licensing of medicines is approved by the MHRA. The MHRA, or [Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency](https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1GCEA_enGB1139GB1139&cs=0&sca_esv=7448be8be03549f8&q=Medicines+and+Healthcare+products+Regulatory+Agency&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjl5cnAy_2NAxUIYEEAHZOEAO4QxccNegQIAhAB&mstk=AUtExfAgGQurEPOsk8hq76kfDLt7Em8imcb-3fkLyZzYTFEW-gyljsKFY2xA2PvDPKdQeughkRgrks9dYk5r9tTnSCt-VRPCs1iQqxBTiI1BAvchQ6TAnyO38GBVw_tOVBFc4YA&csui=3), licenses medicines in the UK by assessing their quality, safety, and efficacy for their intended use. This assessment results in a [Marketing Authorisation (MA)](https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1GCEA_enGB1139GB1139&cs=0&sca_esv=7448be8be03549f8&q=Marketing+Authorisation+%28MA%29&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjl5cnAy_2NAxUIYEEAHZOEAO4QxccNegQIAxAB&mstk=AUtExfAgGQurEPOsk8hq76kfDLt7Em8imcb-3fkLyZzYTFEW-gyljsKFY2xA2PvDPKdQeughkRgrks9dYk5r9tTnSCt-VRPCs1iQqxBTiI1BAvchQ6TAnyO38GBVw_tOVBFc4YA&csui=3), allowing the medicine to be legally placed on the UK market.

The licensed indication for any medicine can be found in the summary of product characteristics (SPC), which is a description of a medicinal product’s properties, and the conditions attached to its use. SPCs can be found here in the [electronic medicines compendium (emc)](https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc#gref) or via the [MHRA](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/find-product-information-about-medicines).

For GLP1-s, it should be noted that the licensed indications are different to the NICE TA and NHSE interim commissioning guidance criteria.

Both Wegovy and Mounjaro are licensed as an adjunct to a reduced-calorie diet and increased physical activity for weight management, including weight loss and weight maintenance, in adults with an initial Body Mass Index (BMI) of

• ≥30 kg/m2 (obesity), or

• ≥27 kg/m2 to <30 kg/m2 (overweight) in the presence of at least one weight-related comorbidity.

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/search?q=wegovy>

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/search?q=mounjaro>

(Mounjaro is also licensed for type-2 diabetes).

There are several products licensed for weight loss, but the main focus of demand relates to Wegovy® (semaglutide) and Mounjaro® (tirzepatide).

The only GLP-1 receptor agonists licensed for weight management are [liraglutide](https://bnf.nice.org.uk/drugs/liraglutide/) (*Saxenda*®), [semaglutide](https://bnf.nice.org.uk/drugs/semaglutide/) (*Wegovy*®), and [tirzepatide](https://bnf.nice.org.uk/drugs/tirzepatide/) (*Mounjaro*®), which is also a glucose-dependent insulinotropic polypeptide (GIP) receptor agonist.

Semaglutide branded as Ozempic® or Rybelsus®, are not licensed for weight loss; they are only licensed for type-2 diabetes.

Both Wegovy and Mounjaro have licensed indications AND separate NHS commissioning policies (NICE Technology Appraisals and interim NHS Commissioning Guidance) related to them; these are not the same. NHS clinicians should be aware of the differences and ensure they adhere to the NHS commissioning policies if prescribing on the NHS.

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## Private Providers

The quality and safety of private providers of weight loss medicines has been raised in a recent (April 2025) Government Research Briefing [CBP-10171.pdf](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fresearchbriefings.files.parliament.uk%2Fdocuments%2FCBP-10171%2FCBP-10171.pdf&data=05%7C02%7Cl.angus%40nhs.net%7C4bd1d99a3d914d63de2d08dda1a9094d%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638844469561047743%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=tMxbXEzqEa2ZLAmIJt7fdoYZFJtUc2v77yO1NEGOgYA%3D&reserved=0) Section 7 deals with concerns with weight loss medicines. The ICB is aware of these concerns but is not able to act in a regulatory capacity. We understand that NHS providers would like support in tackling the inappropriate private supply route. We will write to NHS England, GPhC and GMC to raise our concerns, as significant change goes beyond the remit of the 'powers' of the Integrated Care Board. In the interim, we seek to provide general advice and sources of information on this topic.

We are aware of a variety of legitimate and illegitimate routes to obtain GLP-1 weight loss medicines.

We advise patients to obtain ANY prescription-only medicines from legitimate healthcare providers only.

### Medicines Healthcare products and Regulatory Agency (MHRA)

The Medicines Health and Regulatory Agency have produced guidance for the public, GLP-1 medicines for weight loss and diabetes: what you need to know. Guidance on the safe and effective use of GLP-1 medicines for weight loss and diabetes:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/glp-1-medicines-for-weight-loss-and-diabetes-what-you-need-to-know>

### The Medical Defence Union (MDU)

The MDU have provided some clear advice on this topic for clinicians:

<https://www.themdu.com/guidance-and-advice/latest-updates-and-advice/advice-on-disclosing-information-for-patients-weight-loss-medication>

### Humber Local Medical Committee

The Humber LMC has produced guidance on the matter for GPs: [Private Weight Loss Guidance – Humberside LMC](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fhumbersidelmc.org.uk%2Fprivate-weight-loss-guidance%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cl.angus%40nhs.net%7C4bd1d99a3d914d63de2d08dda1a9094d%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638844469561066629%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=5KySpiOmygf7EP6JUk4YHUFLfad1pbi4ATkuFNc9tzs%3D&reserved=0)

*"In line with Good Medical Practice guidance, it is the responsibility of the prescriber to make an assessment of the patient and judge their suitability to receive the prescription.*

*It is not acceptable for private providers to seek to transfer this responsibility to the patients' NHS GP and GPC has issued*[*updated guidance*](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gmc-uk.org%2Fprofessional-standards%2Fthe-professional-standards%2Fgood-practice-in-prescribing-and-managing-medicines-and-devices&data=05%7C02%7Cl.angus%40nhs.net%7C4bd1d99a3d914d63de2d08dda1a9094d%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638844469561085604%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Y9PRvZo33NgiTtzw4cq9V3aq4vCrGE9W37RMmSNRa5o%3D&reserved=0)*to pharmacists about the risks and responsibilities of this prescribing. This includes them seeking information from the patient directly or conducting video consultations etc…"*

*"However, while these private companies may change how they approach this prescribing in the future, we want patients to receive safe treatment and not come to harm. Important MDO guidance on these requests has been published and we would advise you read this.*[*Read the MDO guidance*](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.themdu.com%2Fguidance-and-advice%2Flatest-updates-and-advice%2Fadvice-on-disclosing-information-for-patients-weight-loss-medication&data=05%7C02%7Cl.angus%40nhs.net%7C4bd1d99a3d914d63de2d08dda1a9094d%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638844469561106413%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Ehl%2BOrAKSkwsgTm5fhTrpbPczj3DO6VXBKbxydccaZo%3D&reserved=0)*.*

It summarises:

*“If it becomes clear that the weight loss medication is contraindicated, it probably isn’t an option to ignore the letter.*

*Another dilemma arises if the patient has misrepresented their BMI or medical history to the pharmacy. In these circumstances, it is best to check with the patient about whether they consent to the information being disclosed.”*

The MDO guidance then advises how you may approach highlighting any concerns, including seeking consent from the patient."

### General Pharmaceutical Council

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) has published the standards expected of pharmacy owners and Superintendent Pharmacist in ensuring safe and effective provision of services at a distance (including on the internet), rather than in the traditional face-to-face way: [Guidance for registered pharmacies providing pharmacy services at a distance, including on the internet](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.pharmacyregulation.org%2Ffiles%2F2025-02%2Fgphc-guidance-registered-pharmacies-providing-pharmacy-services-distance-february-2025.pdf&data=05%7C02%7Cl.angus%40nhs.net%7C4bd1d99a3d914d63de2d08dda1a9094d%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638844469561169267%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=oOvB6hl8A%2BzUbX3%2BJMCfw4cFM40ju8rqtishen5LVVQ%3D&reserved=0). This document identifies some medicines that are not suitable to be prescribed by a questionnaire model alone, and some medicines are not suitable to be supplied unless extra safeguards have been put in place to make sure they are clinically appropriate. The publication lists *medicines used for weight management* included within this cohort.

Additionally, in considering pharmacy remote weight loss management clinics, the guidance states: "the prescriber independently verifies the person’s weight, height and/or body mass index. By ‘independently’ we mean that the prescriber uses a different way to verify the information provided to them by the person. This could be through a video consultation, in person, from the person’s clinical records or by contacting another healthcare provider such as the person’s GP. Verifying information helps to confirm that any continued supply is clinically suitable and helps to safeguard vulnerable people. Verifying information through a phone call would not be appropriate when supplying medication for weight loss".

The GPhC's guidance should be used alongside the GPhC's [Standards for registered pharmacies](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pharmacyregulation.org%2Fpharmacies%2Fstandards-and-guidance-registered-pharmacies&data=05%7C02%7Cl.angus%40nhs.net%7C4bd1d99a3d914d63de2d08dda1a9094d%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638844469561191607%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=9k0ttTiqBMJbM2eTQ4UbW7CRyhd73MYGJw%2Fuz%2BvRg1c%3D&reserved=0) and the [Standards for pharmacy professionals](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pharmacyregulation.org%2Fpharmacists%2Fstandards-and-guidance-pharmacy-professionals&data=05%7C02%7Cl.angus%40nhs.net%7C4bd1d99a3d914d63de2d08dda1a9094d%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638844469561211361%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=f5z5%2BWWiFOoeF30MoZygJFbXD%2Bygpljd0f%2BNpS0Z4OQ%3D&reserved=0).

### Royal Pharmaceutical Society

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society's publication [A Competency Framework for all Prescribers](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.rpharms.com%2FPortals%2F0%2FRPS%2520document%2520library%2FOpen%2520access%2FPrescribing%2520Competency%2520Framework%2FRPS%2520English%2520Competency%2520Framework%25203.pdf%3Fver%3DmctnrKo4YaJDh2nA8N5G3A%253d%253d&data=05%7C02%7Cl.angus%40nhs.net%7C4bd1d99a3d914d63de2d08dda1a9094d%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638844469561229862%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=TRr4sS4PsdrYYU7hhIIw6tEkRVT3YVvg7MwvNaB%2FdS0%3D&reserved=0) identifies the monitoring of any prescribing decisions is a core function of prescribing; we would expect the prescriber ensures monitoring is undertaken.

## Specific Advice on Contraception/Pregnancy

All individuals of child-bearing potential (who are able to become pregnant) using GLP-1 medications should take steps to ensure they do not become pregnant.

### MHRA

The MHRA have provided some [guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/glp-1-medicines-for-weight-loss-and-diabetes-what-you-need-to-know/glp-1-medicines-for-weight-loss-and-diabetes-what-you-need-to-know#glp-1-medicines-contraception-and-pregnancy)

### FSHR

The Faculty of Sexual Health & Reproductive Healthcare (FSHR) have produced guidance for [Clinicians](https://www.fsrh.org/Public/Public/Documents/FSRH-statement-Glucagon-like-peptide-1-agonists-and-oral-contraception-Feb-2025.aspx) and [Patients](https://fsrh.org/Common/Uploaded%20files/documents/Patient-information-GLP-1-agonists-and-contraception.pdf?_gl=1*5739r*_ga*Mjc2MzIyMzM5LjE3NDkxMjMyNjU.*_ga_S2TDH89J5C*czE3NDkxMjMyNjUkbzEkZzAkdDE3NDkxMjMyNjUkajYwJGwwJGgw)

## Black Triangle Status

We remind all clinicians that these are 'black triangle medicines'.

Up to and including May 29, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has received “a total of 111 UK spontaneous suspected adverse drug reaction (ADR) reports with a fatal outcome” where glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1 RA) medicines were used for any reason, the regulator has revealed. ([Source](https://www.chemistanddruggist.co.uk/news/clinical/exclusive-over-100-uk-deaths-now-linked-to-glp-1-ras-N23DYU55NBEFNIRBJLO4YEEYLA/))

All reported side effects and adverse effects should be reported to the MHRA using the Yellow Card Scheme.

<https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>

## Reporting Poor Practice

If you are concerned about an individual or a provider, we suggest that you raise this directly with the provider in the first instance. If this is unsuccessful or unsatisfactory, the concerns should be reported directly to the relevant regulatory and professional bodies.

Please provide as much detail as possible to support the complaint. Please do not share patient identifiable information without written consent from the patient.

Doctors - GMC - <https://www.gmc-uk.org/concerns>

Nurses - NMC - <https://www.nmc.org.uk/concerns-nurses-midwives/raise-a-concern/>

Pharmacists AND Pharmacies (business/premises) - GPhC - <https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/patients-and-public/reporting-concerns>

Health and Care Professionals Council – (Allied Health Professionals) - <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/concerns/raising-concerns/>

Healthcare providers – (including concerns about unregulated providers) - <https://www.cqc.org.uk/contact-us/report-concern/report-concern-if-you-are-member-public>

The ICB Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation Team are happy to support legitimate complaints if the above routes have been tried. Please provide as much detail as possible to support the complaint. Please do not share any patient identifiable information with the ICB without written consent from the patient.

## Counterfeit and Fake Medicines

* [Visit the #FakeMeds website](https://fakemeds.campaign.gov.uk/) for tools and resources to help people purchase medicines or medical devices safely online.

<https://fakemeds.campaign.gov.uk/>

* Anyone who suspects that their product is fake is encouraged to report it directly to the Yellow Card scheme, through the website (<https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>) or by searching the Google Play or Apple App stores for MHRA Yellow Card.
* The MHRA Criminal Enforcement Unit investigates illegal medicine supply. You can report concerns via the [MHRA Yellow Card Scheme](https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/).
* UK Law Enforcement
  + Police: If you suspect criminal activity, report it to your local police or call 101 (non-emergency) / 999 (emergency).
  + Crimestoppers: Report anonymously via [Crimestoppers UK](https://crimestoppers-uk.org/).
* NHS England & Local Authorities
  + NHS Counter Fraud Authority investigates fraudulent medicine supply.
  + Local Trading Standards can act against illegal medicine sales.

## Promoting/Advertising Prescription Only Medicines (POMs)

* Human Medicines Regulations 2012: It is illegal to promote the prescription, supply, sale, or use of POMs to the general public.
* MHRA Advertising Guidance: POMs can only be promoted to healthcare professionals who are qualified to prescribe or supply them.
* The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is the UK’s independent regulator of advertising across all media. We apply the Advertising Codes, which are written by the Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP). ASA & CAP Code: Rule 12.12 explicitly prohibits advertising POMs to the public in any form, including websites and social media.

<https://www.asa.org.uk/news/prescription-for-compliance-poms-and-the-code.html>

* Healthcare providers can promote consultations for conditions that may require POMs, but not the medicines themselves.
* Pharmaceutical companies can provide educational materials to healthcare professionals but must avoid direct-to-consumer advertising.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/blue-guide-advertising-and-promoting-medicines>

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6012d8c9d3bf7f05c2040b4e/Appendix_6.pdf>

* The Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) has issued a warning to businesses and individuals who are targeting members of the public with ads for weight loss prescription-only medicines: [https://www.asa.org.uk/news/trim-down-your-weight-loss-medicine-ads-doctor-s-orders.html](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.asa.org.uk%2Fnews%2Ftrim-down-your-weight-loss-medicine-ads-doctor-s-orders.html&data=05%7C02%7Cl.angus%40nhs.net%7C4bd1d99a3d914d63de2d08dda1a9094d%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638844469561147743%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=823rS0pPtSQ641dIPOJCaY0XqfupOPI68zi8Y6kc7Z4%3D&reserved=0).
* ASA has launched a cross-organisational project whereby it will monitor, investigate and issue enforcement action to tackle non-compliance.
* If you see advertising of POMs that does not meet the MHRA guidance, it can be reported to both ASA and MHRA:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/advertise-your-medicines#complain-about-an-advert>

<https://www.asa.org.uk/make-a-complaint.html>

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