

Professional Prescribing Restrictions: **A Reminder for Non-Medical Prescribers**

Working as a non-medical prescriber in primary care is both a rewarding and challenging role. With primary care providing vast opportunities for non-medical prescribers to expand their prescribing practice in a broad range of clinical areas.

It is important that any expansion of prescribing practice is:

- done in a structured manner.
- in line with the standards of prescribing posed by professional body regulators, such as the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) and Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).
- within the legal and regulatory frameworks affecting prescribing practice e.g. controlled drugs are subject to additional legal controls as they carry a higher risk of being misused or causing harm, and there are restrictions to prescribing for non-medical prescribers, depending on profession and level of prescribing qualification.

To support safe and effective prescribing in primary care, non-medical prescribers are reminded to:

- use their own professional codes of conduct, local and national standards and guidance along with the [Royal Pharmaceutical Society \(RPS\) - A Competency Framework for All Prescribers](#) to support their prescribing practice;
- only prescribe within their own scope of practice and competence;
- not routinely sign repeat prescriptions, unless the repeat prescriptions are for patients who are under their care and are for drugs within their scope of practice - Non-medical prescribers must be aware by signing repeat prescriptions they do so in the knowledge that they are responsible as the signatory of the prescription and are accountable for their practice;
- be aware of their limitations and to share these with their practice manager and supervisor, so that, where necessary, practice activity can be amended - the table below highlights the limitations to prescribing as per type of non-medical prescriber.

See Table over leaf – professional prescribing restrictions for Non-medical prescribers

References:

1. BNF online ([Non-medical prescribing | Medicines guidance | BNF | NICE](#))
2. Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) website ([Who can prescribe what? - PSNC Website](#))
3. The Health and Care Professions Council website ([Controlled drugs | hcpc-uk.org](#))
4. Royal Pharmaceutical Society: Medicines Ethics and Practice. Edition 45, July 2022

Type of Non-Medical Prescriber	Allowable items/scope	Can Controlled Drugs (CDs) Schedule 2-5, including codeine and co-codamol, be Prescribed?	Can Off-Label Medicines be Prescribed?	Can Unlicensed Medicines be Prescribed?
Nurse Independent Prescriber (including Midwife Independent Prescriber)	Can prescribe licensed medicines for any medical condition within their competence/scope of practice.*	Yes – any controlled drug (CD) schedule 2,3, 4 or 5, except for cocaine, dipipanone or diamorphine for treating addiction.	Yes (subject to accepted clinical good practice)	Yes (subject to accepted clinical good practice)
Pharmacist Independent Prescriber	Licensed medicines for any medical condition within their competence/scope of practice.*	Yes – any CD schedule 2,3, 4 or 5, except for cocaine, dipipanone or diamorphine for treating addiction.	Yes (subject to accepted clinical good practice)	Yes (subject to accepted clinical good practice)
Physiotherapist Independent Prescriber	Licensed medicines for any medical condition within their competence/scope of practice and within the overarching framework of human movement, performance and function.*	Yes – limited list. The following CDs for the treatment of organic disease or injury provided that the CD is prescribed to be administered by the specified method: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diazepam, Dihydrocodeine, Lorazepam, Morphine, Oxycodone, Temazepam, by oral administration; • Morphine for injectable administration; and • Fentanyl for transdermal administration. 	Yes (subject to accepted clinical good practice)	No
Chiropodist / Podiatrist Independent Prescriber	Licensed medicines for any medical condition within their competence/scope of practice and relevant to the treatment of disorders affecting the foot, ankle and associated structures.*	Yes – limited list. The following CDs for the treatment of organic disease or injury provided that the CD is prescribed to be administered by the specified method: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diazepam by oral administration; • Dihydrocodeine by oral administration; • Lorazepam by oral administration; and • Temazepam by oral administration. 	Yes (subject to accepted clinical good practice)	No
Optometrist Independent Prescriber	Licensed medicines for ocular conditions affecting the eye and surrounding tissue only, within recognised area of expertise and competence/scope of practice. Cannot prescribe parenteral medicines.*	No	Yes (subject to accepted clinical good practice)	No
Therapeutic Radiographer Independent Prescriber	Any licensed medicine, within national and local guidelines, for any medical condition within their competence/scope of practice and the overarching framework of treatment of cancer.	No	Yes (subject to accepted clinical good practice)	No
Paramedic Independent Prescriber	Licensed medicines for any medical condition within their competence/scope of practice.*	No	Yes (subject to accepted clinical good practice)	No
Community Practitioner Nurse Prescriber (V100/V150)	Restricted to dressings, appliances and licensed medicines which are listed in the Nurse Prescribers' Formulary for Community Practitioners (see BNF).	No	No. Only exception is nystatin off-label for neonates.	No
Supplementary prescriber	There are no legal restrictions on clinical conditions to be treated under supplementary prescribing, but this must be done as part of an agreed Clinical Management Plan (CMP) and within the prescriber's area of competence.*	Yes – any CD schedule 2, 3, 4 or 5 (except diamorphine, cocaine and dipipanone for the treatment of addiction), providing it is in accordance with the patient's CMP.	Yes, as part of CMP	Yes, as part of CMP

*NHS prescribers must not prescribe medicines that appear in Part XVIII (drugs, medicines and other substances that may not be ordered under the NHS) of the drug tariff at NHS expense.

References:

1. BNF online ([Non-medical prescribing | Medicines guidance | BNF | NICE](#))
2. Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) website ([Who can prescribe what? - PSNC Website](#))
3. The Health and Care Professions Council website ([Controlled drugs | hcpc-uk.org](#))
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