



Partners in improving local health

Medicines Optimisation Update

Wound Care

NHS

Cumbria

Clinical Commissioning Group

What this includes:

Prescribing wound care products cost-effectively, taking into account the individual patient circumstance and overall treatment goal.

Identifying the problem:

A care bundle to support this update is available on the NECS medicines optimisation website:

<http://medicines.necsu.nhs.uk/guidelines/cumbria-guidelines/>

Suggested actions:

Implementing these key messages:

- The tips below should be used as prompts to help rationalise prescribing and are not replacements for clinical judgement. The final decision on what to prescribe and the responsibility lies with the prescriber.
- Use messages on GP prescribing systems e.g. ScriptSwitch@.
- Encourage compliance to the current formulary.
- Monitor the use of expensive dressings using prescribing monitoring systems, and feed back to prescribers regularly.

Choice:

- Select from the dressings listed in the Cumbria Wound Care Formulary.
- Record in the patient's clinical notes if a non-formulary dressing is used and why it has been chosen.
- Do not routinely choose antimicrobial dressings (e.g. silver, iodine or honey) ahead of non-medicated dressings for preventing or treating chronic wounds. Indiscriminate use should be discouraged because of concerns over bacterial resistance and toxicity.
- The British National Formulary (BNF) advises that silver dressings should be used only when infection is suspected as a result of clinical signs and symptoms. They should not be used on acute wounds (as there is some evidence that they delay healing) or used routinely for managing uncomplicated ulcers.
- Antimicrobial dressings should be prescribed for defined short periods of time and their use reviewed regularly.

Dressing Sizes:

- Larger dressings are usually exponentially more expensive than the smaller sizes. Most wounds should ideally reduce in size over time.
- Always query large size dressings on repeat to justify use.

NECS medicines optimisation website. Available at <http://medicines.necsu.nhs.uk/guidelines/cumbria-guidelines/>

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Quantities and repeat prescriptions:

- Dressings should not be prescribed as long term repeat items. The expectation is that the wound and dressing type will change over time. REVIEW need before prescribing. Even chronic wounds may change over time and so the dressing required may also change.
- There should be a process to refer difficult wounds to a Tissue Viability Nurse (TVN).
- Query quantities over 10 units per month. Most dressings can stay in place for 3 to 5 days except on infected wounds. Note that some patients may have multiple wound sites, and may require large quantities of dressings to be prescribed.
- Encourage prescribers to write a dose to give an idea of how much is needed.
- Address underlying problems e.g. soiling from incontinence, wrong choice of dressing etc.
- Refer to TVN, if necessary.
- Add suitable prompts or reminders to computer prescribing systems.
- Add a review date for dressings on computer systems.
- Prescribe the actual 'number of dressings' needed, rather than '1 op' or '1 original pack'.

Suggested actions:

Resources:

- Cumbria wound formulary and order forms:
<http://medicines.necu.nhs.uk/cumbria-wound-formulary/>
- PrescQIPP – antimicrobial dressings: [https://www.prescqip.info/wound-care-antimicrobial-dressings](https://www.prescqip.info/wound-care-antimicrobial-dressings/category/234-wound-care-antimicrobial-dressings)
- PrescQIPP – foam dressings: [https://www.prescqip.info/wound-care-foam-dressings](https://www.prescqip.info/wound-care-foam-dressings/category/266-wound-care-foam-dressings)
- PrescQIPP – soft polymer dressings: [https://www.prescqip.info/wound-care-soft-polymer-dressings](https://www.prescqip.info/wound-care-soft-polymer-dressings/category/267-wound-care-soft-polymer-dressings)
- PrescQIPP – protease matrix dressings: [https://www.prescqip.info/wound-care-protease-matrix-dressings](https://www.prescqip.info/wound-care-protease-matrix-dressings/category/235-wound-care-protease-modulating-matrix-dressings)

References:

- Adapted from the document: 'Top Tip QIPP messages for prescribing dressings' produced by NHS East and South East England Specialist Pharmacy Services, February 2013:
<http://www.medicinesresources.nhs.uk/en/Communities/NHS/SPS-E-and-SE-England/Meds-use-and-safety/QIPP/Wound-Care/Top-Tip-QIPP-messages-for-prescribing-dressings/>
- NICE key therapeutic topic 14 – wound care products, February 2016:
<https://www.nice.org.uk/advice/kt14>