

Supporting Self Care

**Community Pharmacy
Common Ailments
Service**

GP Practice Guide

**September 2016
Version 1**

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Section 1: Introduction

Community Pharmacists already advise patients on a wide range of common ailments and either recommend treatment or refer on to another healthcare professional. The NHS Common Ailments Service builds upon this expertise allowing community pharmacists to offer some treatments, if they are considered necessary, free of charge to eligible patients on the NHS. There is no cost to the practice for this service.

This document is intended to help practice staff understand the Common Ailments Service and support GP Practice staff when they are offering patients access to the service. It should be used in conjunction with the advertising material available to GP practices for promotion. It may also be linked to information about making an appointment with the most appropriate healthcare professional.

Section 2: Service Information

Background

The Welsh Government's "Programme for Government" includes a commitment to "Make better use of pharmacists to improve access to services by providing the first port of call for the consultation and treatment of common minor ailments".

The community pharmacy Common Ailments Service (CAS) is a scheme whereby patients are encouraged to consult a participating community pharmacy, rather than their GP, for a defined list of ailments (Section 3). The pharmacist will give advice, supply medication from an agreed formulary or refer the patient to the GP if necessary. Medicines will be supplied free of charge.

Process

The CAS is intended to:

- ✓ encourage patients who would otherwise have visited a GP for a common ailment to visit the pharmacy instead;
- ✓ provide advice and, where necessary, treatment;
- ✓ promote self-care, thereby increasing resilience.

The service is not intended to:

- ✗ be viewed as a 'free medicines supply' service;
- ✗ convert people, who would otherwise have purchased a medicine, from self-care to pharmacy care.

CAS consultations will be undertaken in the pharmacy's consultation area and with a registered pharmacist. The pharmacist will provide advice about the self-management of the presenting common ailment(s) such that the patient can choose to self-care in the future.

For patients who currently purchase medicines and receive advice from a pharmacist, CAS will represent a less accessible means of receiving care, and it is expected that they will in the main continue to take responsibility for purchasing any medicines that they require. However, for patients who currently perceive a need to see a GP to manage any of the ailments covered by the service, CAS will be an accessible option.

Patients who currently see the GP in order to get a prescription for free treatment will have the payment barrier to accessing a pharmacy for treatment removed.

Patients who currently see the GP because they wish to receive advice and reassurance from a professional in a clinical setting will be reassured by consultations being with a pharmacist in a consultation room. It is envisaged that this will facilitate the transfer of care of these individuals.

Registration and remuneration

Patients will be required to register with CAS; to do so they must be registered with a GP in Wales. Registration is underpinned by an IT system which also provides a means of recording consultations. A patient's pharmacy consultation history will be viewable in any pharmacy in which the patient presents for treatment under CAS. This will promote good care and prevent abuse of the service. In future, it is intended that these electronic pharmacy consultation records will be shared with a patient's GP, until this functionality is available, practices will receive a paper based consultation summary.

Evidence-based approach - Formulary

The CAS formulary will be used to ensure that treatments offered through the service are clinically effective and represent value for money for NHS Wales. In order to realise the benefits of CAS, it is important that the treatments and principles set out in the formulary are adopted across Wales by all healthcare professionals involved in treating common ailments. There is a significant risk that to not do so would undermine confidence in CAS and result in patients returning to their GP for treatment if they perceived the treatments prescribed by them to be more effective.

The CAS formulary has been developed by AWMSG (All Wales Medicines Strategy Group) to provide evidence-based guidance for minor ailments, which would support a consistent approach between pharmacists and GPs. It was developed via multi-professional discussion and consultation.

The formulary is available via the Inform Formulary website: <http://cas.inform.wales.nhs.uk/IndexAMG.aspx>

Evaluation

The Common ailments service was implemented as a Pathfinder Service in two localities within Cwm Taf & Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Boards.

The pathfinder was centrally funded from October 2013 – September 2015. An All Wales evaluation of the scheme was carried out in the two pathfinder sites. This was carried out between September 2013 – November 2014.

The National evaluation concluded:

- That the Choose Pharmacy pathfinder service has been well designed and delivered.
- That demand has continued to rise as awareness has improved and the service has been embedded. While engagement by pharmacists and GP practices has been variable, there are examples of high activity and effective practice in delivering the service.
- Due to small pathfinder sample numbers the service has yet to make an impact at scale, although many stakeholders considered that the pathfinders have delivered positive outcomes, and would welcome the continuation of the service.

- If Choose pharmacy was rolled out following the same pattern as the Cwm Taf and Betsi Cadwaladr pathfinder sites the impact and economic evaluation suggests a positive return on investment in Choose Pharmacy over the next five years based on the performance of the service in the two pathfinders.

The full evaluation of the Pathfinder Service can be found at:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/evaluation-choose-pharmacy-common-ailments-service/?lang=en>

Section 3 Conditions to be treated

	Condition	Advice/Treatment	Age Restrictions
1	Acne	Treatment	
2	Athlete's Foot	Treatment	
3	Backache (Acute)	Treatment	Aged 20 -55 years
4	Chicken Pox (In Children Under 14)	Treatment	< 14 years
5	Cold Sores	Advice Only	
6	Colic	Advice Only	
7	Conjunctivitis (Bacterial)	Treatment	> 2 years
8	Constipation	Treatment	>10 years
9	Dermatitis (Acute Exacerbation)	Treatment	
10	Diarrhoea	Advice Only	>1 years
11	Dry Eyes	Treatment	Refer to optometrist
12	Haemorrhoids	Treatment	
13	Hay Fever	Treatment	
14	Head Lice	Treatment	
15	Indigestion And Reflux	Treatment	>12 years
16	Ingrowing Toenail	Advice Only	
17	Intertrigo/Ringworm	Treatment	
18	Mouth Ulcers	Advice Only	>10 years
19	Nappy Rash	Treatment	
20	Oral Thrush	Treatment	
21	Scabies	Treatment	> 2 years
22	Sore Throat And Tonsillitis	Treatment	
23	Teething	Treatment	> 3 months
24	Threadworms	Treatment	> 2 years
25	Vaginal Thrush	Treatment	Aged 16 – 60 years
26	Verruca	Treatment	>2 years

Notes:

- Where no specific age restrictions apply, the service will be delivered in line with the over-the-counter licensed age ranges for the included medications.
- Advice only conditions – no NHS treatment is available for these conditions under the Choose Pharmacy Common Ailment Service, pharmacists will provide self care advice only. This is an AWMSG evidence based approach.
- Occasionally, treatments specified in the Formulary will not be available (e.g. manufacturing delays). For most conditions, this should not interrupt service delivery as a number of treatments are available within the formulary. If all treatments are unavailable, a procedure is in place for pharmacists to escalate this to HB's and AWMSG for consideration. GP practices will be informed by the HB and community pharmacies of these instances to ensure patient care is not interrupted.
- The AWMSG Formulary restricts the number of times a pharmacist can treat a patient for a common ailment in a 12 month period. For most conditions this is one to two episodes per year, the exception is hayfever treatment that can be provided on up to six occasions. Patients presenting on multiple occasions for treatment will be referred to their GP practice for further consultation.
- Patients who do not meet inclusion criteria will be offered self care or referral to another Healthcare Professional (HCP) where appropriate.
- Patients requesting treatment for eye conditions (Conjunctivitis & dry eye) should be referred to a local optometrist offering the Eye Health Examination Wales (EHEW) Service in the first instance <http://www.eyecare.wales.nhs.uk/ehew> Referral pathways between this service and Choose Pharmacy will enable these patients to access appropriate treatment.

Section 4: Referrals & Communication

The implementation of robust referral pathways both into the Common Ailment Service and onward referral to other practitioners is vital to the success of this service.

Referrals to pharmacy

GP Practices can refer eligible patients to the Common Ailments Service where appropriate. Practice staff should refer to practice procedures and ensure that staff have appropriate clinical knowledge if triaging calls and offering referral.

The following good practice points may be useful when developing practice procedures for referral to the Choose Pharmacy Common Ailment Service¹.

For patients making an appointment by telephone:

Patient describes symptoms unasked

If a patient telephones or calls at a surgery for a prescription or an appointment, they will often describe their symptoms unasked. If the symptoms are among those included in the common ailments service, the receptionist may:

- Explain the service; the patient may obtain advice and treatment from a participating pharmacist without having to wait for an appointment with a doctor.
- Advise the patient that they have the choice whether to see the GP or visit the pharmacist instead.
- It is important to note that this should be left to the patient to make their choice.

Patient request appointment without describing symptoms

If the patient is telephoning a request for an appointment, the receptionist must avoid directly asking what the problem is.

- The receptionist may, using his/her judgement, discern that the request is related to a common ailment. If so, the receptionist could say to the patient: **“You may not be aware that there is a Common Ailments Service operating in the area now. Patients may go to a participating pharmacy to receive advice and treatment rather than having to wait for an appointment. The ailments included in the Service are ... [, sore throat, nasal congestion, hay fever, athlete’s foot, oral thrush, vaginal thrush, threadworms, headlice or diarrhoea]. Does your illness come into any of these categories?”**

- This information could also be recorded on the practice phone-lines for information to the patient when they are waiting to be connected to the surgery.

1 Northern Ireland Health & Social Care Board, Minor Ailments Service GP Guide 2010

- If the patient says yes, the receptionist may then ask if they would like to use this Service rather than coming to see the doctor.
- Advise the patient that they have the choice whether to see the GP or visit the pharmacist instead.
- It is important to note that this should be left to the patient to make their choice.

For patients making an appointment in person:

- If the patient is presenting in person, the receptionist should, using the same terminology as before, inform them that there is a Service in operation and that they can be directed to a local pharmacist for advice and treatment rather than waiting for an appointment.
- Refer to the list of common ailments cards available for GP practices and given to the patient for them to decide if their presenting complaint is included on the list, in which case can then be directed to the pharmacist for further advise.
- Advise the patient that they have the choice whether to see the GP or visit the pharmacist instead.
- It is important to note that this should be left to the patient to make their choice.

For all patients:

- Patients may receive advice only, or advice and treatment after appropriate assessment by the pharmacist. If medication is required, it will be supplied from the agreed formulary free-of-charge.
- Patients are expected to attend the pharmacy in person.
- If a patient chooses not to take advantage of the Service to have a consultation with a pharmacist then an appointment with the GP should be made in the normal way.
- Advise patients that they can use any of the pharmacies that are part of the Service.

Read Codes

The following read codes should be used to record outcome of interventions:

#8HHm –Referral to Minor* ailment scheme

#8I3i – Refused referral to Minor* ailment scheme

* GP systems do not recognise the terminology "Common Ailment"

Who should not be referred?

- If a prescriber has made a decision about the medicine a patient needs, then a prescription must be issued. A GP cannot write a prescription for one item and refer the patient to the Service for another named item.
- Patients who are currently receiving treatment from a GP (e.g. repeat prescription) should not be transferred to the Choose Pharmacy Common Ailment Service.

Pharmacists will have to refer patients back to the surgery if they are inappropriately referred into the service.

Unable to treat

On occasion patients may request an appointment for a Common Ailment that is not included in the current service or an exclusion criteria may apply. In these instances patients will be advised to contact the practice to discuss treatment needs. Pharmacists will provide patients with a form which they will need to present at the GP Practice. This form can be found on page 20 of this information pack.

Referrals from pharmacy

If a patient presents at the pharmacy with symptoms indicating the need for a consultation with another HCP the locally agreed method for referral should be instigated.

Urgent Referrals

Patients requiring an urgent appointment with either a GP, or other HCP will be given a referral letter (CP-001). This will include

- Patient details
- Details of presenting symptoms/condition
- Reason for referral
- Contact details for pharmacist
- Advice to patients on making appointment (reverse of form)

Pharmacists may contact the practice where they feel the need to speak to a clinician.

Routine Referrals

Patients requiring routine, non-urgent appointments will be advised to contact the practice to arrange an appointment. These patients will **not** be given referral letters in order to support practices in differentiating urgent and routine referrals.

Read Codes

The following read codes should be used to record outcome of interventions

#9NIQ (lower case L) –Seen by pharmacist

For all patients:

GP practices will be sent a summary of all pharmacy consultations (see below) including those where a referral is made to ensure that GP's have access to consultation information. This will include

- Patient details
- Date and time of consultation
- Treatment provided and/or
- Advice given

Consultation summaries will be forwarded in a timely manner, usually within 72 hours of the consultation.

Consultation summaries should be stored as patient records (using read code **#9NIQ**)

Returned back to the patient's GP Practice:

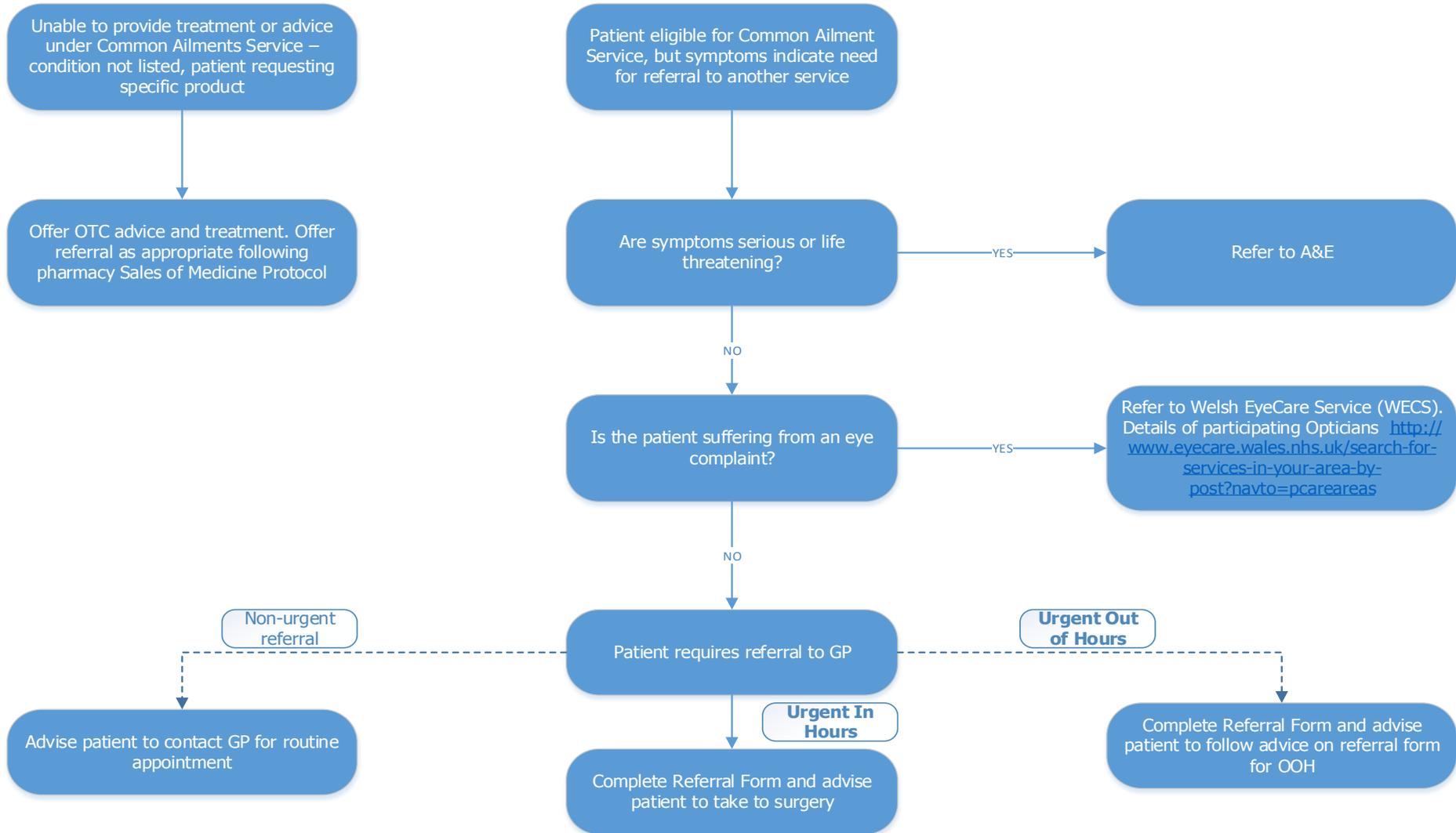
Common Ailments Consultation		A & JM Sheppard Ltd, Tiroed-y-Bryn Pharmacy, Heol Aneurth, Penyrheol, Caerphilly	
Patient: James BROWN		NHS Number: 974 485 1252	
DOB: 01-Jan-1970 Gender: M			
GP details		Patient details	
GP Name	DR.	Patient Name	JAMES BROWN
GP Address	The Health Centre (Ynys Mon) Beaumaris Ynys Mon Anglesey LL58 8AL	Date of birth	01-Jan-1970
GP Telephone	01248 810818	Gender	M
		NHS Number	974 485 1252
		Address	26 Castle Street Beaumaris Gwynedd NULL LL58 8AP
Consultation details			
Consultation Date	16-May-2016		
Presenting Ailment	BACKACHE (ACUTE)		
Referred By	Self Referral		
Symptoms For	3-4 days		
Prescribed Items			
Product		Pack Size	Amount
Back Book		1	1
Paracetamol 500 mg tablets		32	1

Referral forms and paper consultation summaries should be retained by the practice.

Ongoing development has been agreed to enhance the service and provide electronic copies of patient information in the near future.

Choose Pharmacy Common Ailments Referral Pathway

Version 1 – September 2016



Choose Pharmacy Common Ailments Referral Letter

To	(GP Surgery /OOH/WECS)		
Date		Time	
Patients Name		DOB	
Patient Address			

The above patient has accessed the Choose Pharmacy (Common Ailments) Service, and following a consultation I feel that they need an urgent appointment with you for the following reason:

Presenting Condition	
Duration of Symptoms	
Reason for Referral	

Pharmacist Signature			
Pharmacist Name		GPhC Number	
Pharmacist contact number			

For GP Practice/WECS/OOH Use

Appointment details (Date/Time)	
Management (action taken/referral)	
Treatment advised (Specify)	
Follow up recommended	

Common Ailment Service Referral Form – Version 2 January 2014

Information for patients:

To make an appointment with your GP

Either

- Telephone your practice to make an appointment
- Tell the person answering the phone that you have been referred by your pharmacist and have a referral letter (CP-001)

Or

- Take this letter to your practice and give it to the receptionist

Remember to take this letter to your appointment for your doctor to see

To make an appointment with the Out of Hours GP service

- Telephone the Out of Hours service (**** area dependant)
- Tell the person answering the phone that you have been referred by your pharmacist and have a referral letter (CP-001)

Remember to take this letter to your appointment for the doctor to see

To make an appointment with the Optometrist

Either

- Telephone the optometrist to make an appointment
- Tell the person answering the phone that you have been referred by your pharmacist and have a referral letter (CP-001)

Or

- Take this letter to the optometrist and give it to the receptionist.

Remember to take this letter to your appointment for your optometrist to see

Section 5 Promoting the Service

Practices may wish to promote the service through a variety of means for example:

- Leaflets and posters – use Welsh Government material only
- Recording a message on the telephone system
- Displaying a message on electronic notice systems

Ultimately, whatever way the practice chooses to promote this service, consideration should be given to ensuring patients are given the appropriate service information to maximise the benefits of the service.

Copies of such material can be obtained from your NWIS Primary Care Specialist.

Please contact your Health Board Team if you have any queries.

Section 6: Concerns and suggestions

Reporting Significant Incidents

All significant incidents (patient safety or other) relating to the Choose Pharmacy-Common Ailments Service should be reported to the Health Board for investigation.

Practices should use existing incident reporting procedures and submit to the relevant Patient Safety Officer within the Health Board.

If possible, SI report forms should include detail of the pharmacy, patient and incident and be categorised in the following way:

Directorate:	Primary Care
Specialty:	Common Ailment Service

Comments and Suggestions

If you have any comments or suggestions relating to any aspect of this service, please either contact your Health Board Team to discuss them or complete and return the comments and suggestions form (appendix 1).

Section 7 Participating Pharmacies

Local Pharmacies	Address	Tel No	Key Contact
ADD IN INFORMATION			

Section 8 Resources & Useful Contacts

Welsh Government Resources

Common Ailments Service A4 Poster

Common Ailments Service A6 Cards

Common Ailments Service Patient Information Leaflet

Additional supplies can be requested by contacting the LHB service lead.

Health Board Contacts

LHB Service Lead

Richard Evans – 01495 241284 – richard.evans8@wales.nhs.uk

Samantha Bright – 01495 241260 – Samantha.bright2@wales.nhs.uk

Significant Incident Reporting

Please report via Datix.

Web Addresses

Formulary <http://cas.inform.wales.nhs.uk/IndexAMG.aspx>

Appendix A: Choose Pharmacy – Common Ailments Service Compliments, Comments & Suggestions Form

This form should be used to communicate any compliments, comments or suggestions you have relating to the Choose Pharmacy – Common Ailment Service.
Any concerns that have resulted in a near miss or incident should be reported via the Significant Incident Reporting procedure

Area of service					
Formulary	<input type="checkbox"/>	CAS Application (pharmacy only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Referral process	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Brief Description

How do you think the issue could be resolved/service improved

Additional Information

Completed by:

Name: _____ **Designation:** _____

Signature: _____ **Organisation:** _____

Date: _____

Please post this form to the NWIS PC Specialist on:
NHS Wales Informatics Service
Mamhilad House
Mamhilad Park Estate
Pontypool NP4 0YP

Choose Pharmacy – Common Ailments

Dear Doctor

The following patient requested treatment under the Choose Pharmacy (Common Ailments Service) today

Patient Name & Address	
Date of Birth	

Unfortunately I have been unable to treat them for the following reason and have suggested they return to the practice to discuss making an appointment.

<input type="checkbox"/> Condition not included	<input type="checkbox"/> Exclusion Criteria apply	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
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Yours sincerely

Pharmacist Signature			
Pharmacist Name		Date	
Pharmacist contact number			

Choose Pharmacy – Common Ailments

Dear Doctor

The following patient requested treatment under the Choose Pharmacy (Common Ailments

Patient Name & Address	
Date of Birth	

Unfortunately I have been unable to treat them for the following reason and have suggested they return to the practice to discuss making an appointment.

<input type="checkbox"/> Condition not included	<input type="checkbox"/> Exclusion Criteria apply	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
---	---	--------------------------------

Yours sincerely

Pharmacist Signature			
Pharmacist Name		Date	
Pharmacist contact number			