



GP Prescribing for Self and Family Members

Clinical and Prescribing

Over the last few years the LMC has been made aware of a number of GPs who have been reported to the GMC for self-prescribing. The LMC would strongly advise GPs not to prescribe for themselves or their family, except in exceptional circumstances.

The areas of high risk are controlled drugs, psychiatric medication and drugs for erectile dysfunction.

The GMC Guidelines in “**Good Medical Practice**” are quite clear:

13. “Doctors should, wherever possible, avoid treating themselves or anyone with whom they have a close personal relationship and should be registered with a GP outside their family. Controlled drugs can present particular problems, occasionally resulting in a loss of objectivity leading to drug misuse and misconduct.”

14. You should not prescribe a controlled drug for yourself or someone close to you unless:

a. No other person with the legal right to prescribe is available to assess the patient's clinical condition and to prescribe without a delay which would put the patient's life or health at risk, or cause the patient unacceptable pain, and

b. That treatment is immediately necessary to:

i. Save life

ii. Avoid serious deterioration in the patient's health, or

iii. Alleviate otherwise uncontrollable pain.

15. You must be able to justify your actions and must record your relationship and the emergency circumstances that necessitated your prescribing a controlled drug for yourself or someone close to you.

The LMC is also aware of GPs who have been reported to the GMC for self-prescribing antibiotics. Pharmacists will often challenge self-prescribed medication and some will refuse to dispense the prescription. This is based on updated advice they have received from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, the pharmacists’ professional body.

The LMC is aware of cases where a GP has prescribed for themselves using a false name.

Prescribing for yourself or your family using a false name is fraud and a criminal offence and your registration with the GMC will certainly be at risk.

Please remember that issuing a prescription for yourself on an FP10 for a drug that should be issued as a private prescription is also fraud. This is particularly relevant if you have retired or resigned from the NHS when you should have returned ALL your FP10 prescription pads to the NHS England Area Team. FP10s can only be used for patients you treat under a GP contract with NHS England.



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