

Engagement Report: Minor Ailment Scheme

Executive Summary

Proposal

To remove some or all of the treatments available on the Minor Ailment Scheme.

Engagement Activities

Engagement was carried out via:

- Online survey, promoted by:
 - Social media
 - Press article
 - Patient Participation Groups
 - Third sector partners such as Healthwatch Blackpool
 - Parent groups through Blackpool Council Family Information Service
- Face to face focus group sessions
- A Twitter poll
- A letter to the Lancashire Pharmacy Committee

Response

There were 64 responses to the survey along with two focus groups which each had around six people in attendance. Two people responded to the Twitter poll.

Recommendations

From the survey results the below recommendations are made:

1. Continue with the proposal to remove treatments for self-limiting minor ailments from the scheme.
2. Consider the impact of removing any treatments or the scheme as a whole upon those who do not pay for their prescription or for those with young children.

Full report

Introduction and Background

The CCG is required to make a saving of £6.4million during 2016-17 in order to deliver a year-end surplus of £1,175,00, as agreed with NHS England.

As a result of this several Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) schemes have been identified to improve quality of services whilst reducing spend where possible.

The Minor Ailment Scheme (MAS) provides any person who is registered with a Blackpool GP, access to medication for the treatment of minor ailments characterised by acute onset. The service is provided through Community Pharmacies who have signed up to provide this service.

Between 30 September 2015 and 1 October 2016, 17,040 consultations took place via the MAS at an approximate cost of £161,000. (Medicines approx.£110,000 and consultation fees circa £50,000).

In June 2016 preparations for head lice were removed from the MAS in-line with NICE guidance which recommends wet-combing over other treatments such as hair lotions.. This removal was met with limited resistance.

In August 2016 a separate QIPP scheme proposed GPs stop prescribing certain treatments for self-limiting conditions. The majority of stakeholders who the CCG engaged with prior to this being implemented were in favour of the move.

With these previous developments in mind, the CCG has been reviewing the treatments available on the MAS with a view to potentially removing some of these. The CCG's clinical leadership team approved a proposal to further explore this possibility.

In October the CCG communications team conducted engagement activity to assess the public and stakeholder's opinions on the proposal to withdraw some treatments and the scheme in general.

This report outlines the findings of this activity.

Methodology

In accordance to the Health and Social Care Act 2012 section 14U, which states: "Each clinical commissioning group must, in the exercise of its functions, promote the involvement of patients, and their carers and representatives (if any), in decisions which relate to their care or treatment" a period of engagement activity was undertaken.

A draft survey was created and shown to the Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Forum.

Once approved the survey was uploaded to the internet and included on the CCG consultation web pages.

A copy of the survey can be found at **Appendix 1**.

The survey was promoted to third sector and voluntary organisations for their wider distribution. Healthwatch Blackpool issued the survey to all its members and contacts as well as including it on their website, social media platforms and in newsletters.

Members of the public were given the opportunity to attend special drop-in sessions to share their views gather more information and complete the survey if they wished. The drop-in sessions were branded as the CCG's regular 'Your Voice' sessions which are held monthly in public buildings such as libraries. The results of these discussions were fed back in to the online survey to enable further analysis.

A press release (found at **Appendix 2**) was issued to local press to promote the survey. The press release also contained details of drop-in sessions that members of the public could attend.

Intelligence showed that the scheme was mostly used by parents for their children. With this in mind, the CCG linked with the Blackpool Council Family Information service to distribute the survey across their network. The CCG also worked closely with the Family Information service to arrange three focus groups specifically for parents to attend and share their views.

As a result three focus group sessions were held; the first being at the 'messy play' session at Grange Park Community Centre, another at the Talbot and Brunswick Children's Centre and a third at Kincaig Children's Centre with the parent and toddler group. Again, the comments made during these sessions were added to the survey results for ease of analysis.

Towards the end of the engagement period the Blackpool Gazette ran a front page story about the proposal to remove the scheme based on the press release (**appendix 2**) featuring comments in favour of the proposal from MPs. The story can be found here: www.blackpoolgazette.co.uk/our-region/blackpool/medicines-face-axe-in-attempt-to-save-funding-in-blackpool-1-8239907

As the issue had been given a higher profile as a result of the story it was felt the engagement period be extended for a further week to maximise on the exposure and to give newly informed members of the public the opportunity to take part.

Also, a link to the news story was shared via social media and a twitter poll was used asking one question: What do you think about the story? With answer options of; "make changes to save cash" and "don't change the scheme"

Findings

There were 64 responses to the survey including the responses from the several people who attended the focus group sessions.



MAS results final.pdf

A full breakdown of all the results can be found here:

Of those responding:

- 34 per cent had used the scheme
- 21 per cent used the scheme occasionally or often.

- Of those who had not used the scheme 69 per cent said they would buy treatments over the counter from a local shop or supermarket.
- 56 per cent said they would always speak to their local pharmacist about treatment for a minor ailment in the first instance.
 - 39 per cent said they would look for advice on the NHS choices web site
 - Only 28 per cent said they would visit their GP in the first instance
- The ages of respondents were recorded in the below table.

Answer Choices	Responses
Under 18	0.00%
18-24	9.43%
25-34	30.19%
35-44	13.21%
45-54	22.64%
55-64	13.21%
65-74	3.77%
75-84	0.00%
85 or over	1.89%
Prefer not to say	5.66%

Of the respondents 24.3 per cent were over the age of 55.

Of these over 55s:

- 85% had never used the scheme – the remaining had used the scheme only occasionally.
 - 55% of these said they purchased medication themselves
 - 50% of those that had used the scheme used it for cold and flu remedies
 - 50% of those said they would be unhappy about buying the treatments themselves
- 100% said they would visit their GP with a minor ailment in the first instance
 - 50% said they would also visit the pharmacist.
- The majority said they would be happy to self-purchase treatments for each of the conditions covered by the MAS with the exception of Cystitis and Threadworm.

Of those under 55 years of age:

- 67.5% had never used the scheme
 - Of these 85% said they tend to purchase medication themselves
- 22.5 used the scheme often
 - Of these 69% said they would be happy to buy treatments themselves
- 62% said they would visit a pharmacist with a minor ailment in the first instance
 - 38% said they would use NHS choices website
- The Majority (over 70%) said they would be happy to self-purchase treatments for each of the conditions covered by the MAS with the exception of Threadworm and Vaginal thrush

Those who used the scheme were asked which ailments they had required medication for. The options were made up of those currently available on the scheme. The results can be seen in the below table.

Table 1. Responses from users of the scheme to the question: From the best of your knowledge, which of the following ailments have you required medication for?

Answer Choices	Responses
Allergies (hayfever/bites/stings)	30.00%
Cold sores	10.00%
Colds/flu and/or nasal congestion	25.00%
Conjunctivitis	10.00%
Constipation	0.00%
Cystitis	5.00%
Diarrhoea	5.00%
Heartburn indigestion	15.00%
Common and minor headaches	25.00%
Mouth ulcers	10.00%
Oral thrush	5.00%
Short-term pain (for example, resulting from a significant bump, bruise, sprain or strain)	25.00%
Sore throat	15.00%
Teething pain	25.00%
Temperatures	20.00%
Threadworm	10.00%
Vaginal thrush	15.00%

As can be seen the most common ailments are; allergies, colds and flu, headaches, short term pain, teething pain and high temperatures. These are all self-limiting conditions.

Of those answering the above question, 25 per cent went on to say that they would be happy to purchase the treatments over the counter. A further 30 per cent said they would be willing to purchase over the counter as long as advice was still available (it would be as a standard service provided by a pharmacist).

However, 25 per cent said they would be very unhappy about having to self-purchase. The reasons given for this are:

- Not all medication can be bought over the counter. This reduces the range of treatment available.
- I'm on benefits and would go to the doctor as they are free.
- It's so expensive. Really anything over £3-4 is too expensive and it also often goes to waste such as bottles of medicine that are only half empty when no longer needed.

Everyone who took the survey was asked: How willing would you be to purchase the below treatments yourself as opposed to obtaining via a prescription? The results are shown in the below table.

Table 2. All responses to question: How willing would you be to purchase the below treatments yourself as opposed to obtaining via a prescription?

	More than happy to self-purchase	No problem with purchasing but would still like advice from somebody	Unsure	Unhappy but accepting	Not happy at all to self-purchase
Allergies (hayfever/bites/stings)	67.92%	16.98%	7.55%	3.77%	3.77%
Cold sores	75.47%	16.98%	5.66%	0.00%	1.89%
Colds/flu and/or nasal congestion	75.93%	9.26%	5.56%	5.56%	3.70%
Conjunctivitis	43.40%	32.08%	7.55%	9.43%	7.55%
Constipation	61.11%	24.07%	5.56%	3.70%	5.56%
Cystitis	49.06%	22.64%	11.32%	3.77%	13.21%
Diarrhoea	61.11%	22.22%	3.70%	5.56%	7.41%
Heartburn indigestion	70.37%	14.81%	5.56%	5.56%	3.70%
Common and minor headaches	79.63%	9.26%	3.70%	3.70%	3.70%
Mouth ulcers	69.81%	15.09%	3.77%	7.55%	3.77%
Oral thrush	44.23%	34.62%	7.69%	1.92%	11.54%
Short-term pain (for example, resulting from a significant bump, bruise, sprain or strain)	66.67%	12.96%	3.70%	5.56%	11.11%
Sore throat	73.58%	9.43%	5.66%	5.66%	5.66%
Teething pain	69.81%	7.55%	7.55%	5.66%	9.43%
Temperatures	62.26%	18.87%	5.66%	7.55%	5.66%
Threadworm	48.08%	17.31%	13.46%	7.69%	13.46%
Vaginal thrush	50.94%	16.98%	13.21%	3.77%	15.09%

Those who answered 'unhappy' or 'not happy at all' to the above question were also asked why this was. The responses included:

- I would be happy to pay for them myself as an adult as I mostly don't bother and just let the issue deal with itself over time. However I wouldn't want to make my child wait and would want to get those ASAP.
- Did not know they were available.
- Some of these conditions have symptoms that mask other conditions or are not self-limiting. It is important that everyone receives timely treatment and there are no barriers to this
- Low income
- The price of canesten products. I would still go to my pharmacy for advice for anything else. It's cheap enough to buy. But anything that is over a prescription price I would go to the doctors to get a prescription.
- Too expensive
- I have purchased nearly all the items listed over the years. Allergies I have all year round (dust mites etc.) I wouldn't dream of going to the doctor... just buy tablets from the supermarket.

- Threadworm primarily impacts on children, with the medication costing up to £10. I'm worried parents who can't afford to pay that much may leave their children to suffer.
- Happy to purchase for myself as an adult but think they should still be available for children multiple remedies at high cost.
- Some of these are not 'minor' ailments. These can cause issues with having to take days off work, mobility and those who may struggle with these conditions tend to be less mobile. The problems described above do tend to 'go away' over time but cause discomfort and having medicines alleviate the symptoms and accelerate healing.
- Unsure of the circumstances and also the background as to why I might need them, not enough medical knowledge or experience to make a risk based call.

Other general comments from respondents included:

- It should be kept for those not fortunate enough to be able to pay for treatment, so they do not instead go to the doctor and get a free prescription, should they qualify.
- I love the thought of the minor ailments scheme to free up doctors waiting times and my only fear about removing the scheme is that people would then make appointments to obtain medications. At present I have just made a doctor's appointment and have had to wait just over 3 weeks to see my named GP for a pre booked appointment. When I haven't had the money previously to pay for the medications I need which are usually for the children, then that is when I use minor ailments. If I have the funds then I pay for over the counter medication.
- Used it mainly for my kids which I think should largely continue.
- Most chemists / pharmacies have ceased to stock traditional cheap remedies with BP content. E.g. Kaolin BP has vanished. Expensive Gaviscon is pushed to replace the above. Imodium is pushed rather than Loperamide hydrochloride BP
- The cost of this scheme, bearing in mind it's also limited use age, is significant and presents a contradiction to the self-care agenda. People need to take more responsibility for their health and reduce their reliance on the system/NHS. All of the treatments available via this scheme are available from most/if not all high street pharmacies and supermarkets.
- Often for pennies too! Go and buy them yourself and if you can't afford to buy them then go without, we aren't talking about life threatening conditions. These are MINOR AILMENTS, which will get better in time anyway. The NHS is under enough financial and operational pressure as it is without people milking it for what they can.
- self limiting minor ailment!.. Take some responsibility for your own life. A wholly unnecessary scheme
- Whilst I may be happy to pay for my prescriptions and other items, some areas of Blackpool contain significant pockets of deprivation. The removal of this service may well add to the already creaking GP infrastructure.
- The items mention can be purchased from discount stores at very low costs for people to purchase themselves. It would be more beneficial to spend the money used on the minor ailment scheme in other areas of the NHS.
- Prescription should only be used for something which cannot be purchased over the counter without a prescription.
- Possibly as a means tested benefit or people who get free prescriptions will be attending clinics rather than accessing pharmacies.
- I don't pay for prescription so I have used the scheme to get medication instead of going to the GP which I think is good. If I paid for my prescriptions I would buy over the counter as they are cheaper but instead of removing treatments from the scheme is there a way of saving money by making it that only people who don't pay for prescriptions can access the scheme. Those that do pay are better buying it themselves but the ones that don't often can't afford to.
- As I have a child I find that I end up buying a lot of these things for my child who always needs them straight away. I didn't know about the scheme but as they are ill a

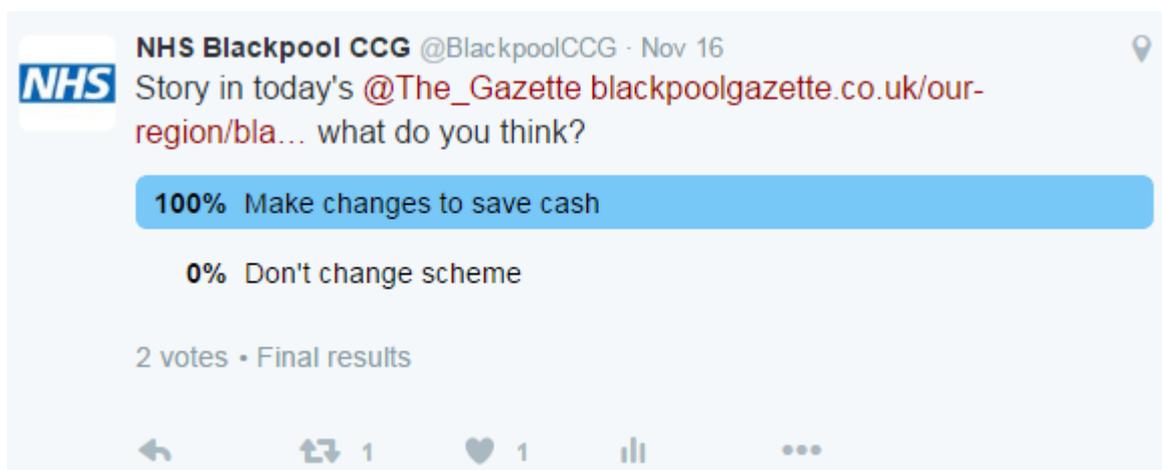
lot the cost of buying the medication can get expensive so I would want to get them on prescription through the scheme. It would be better for me.

- I didn't know about it and always buy medicines myself over the counter but if I did use the scheme I would want to get medication for my child and it can be often and expensive
- A minor ailments scheme makes use of a large network of trained health professionals reducing pressures on GPs and A&E departments. Whilst there is a need to spend NHS money correctly, pharmacy services are significantly cheaper than either GP or A&E appointments. It is important that this service is used to increase patient access and focussing on medications that cannot be bought or are expensive is a way to do this. Whilst some medications are available over the counter, price may be its own barrier (e.g. many thrush treatments) and if left untreated can lead to greater problems
- I think it's a great service that can provide a lot of help for people. It just needs to be expanded to areas that could really help doctors to reduce prescribing. Pharmacies need to work together with doctors surgeries to help reduce costs and help the public
- I have three children and I like to use my chemist.
- I get info from a health visitor. They are just as good as going to the pharmacy
- It's really useful to have access to and I miss being able to get head lice treatment on it.
- Shouldn't have got rid of head lice treatment
- Makes sense for people to purchase but would have concerns about people of limited means going without medication due to cash flow problems would people who are on benefits be safeguarded

In addition to the survey people also had an opportunity to give feedback via other sources. These were as part of the comments section of the Gazette news article online and via the Twitter poll. The comments on the Gazette website included:

- Many of the minor ailments that are being prescribed for at the expense of the NHS are as a direct result of poor hygiene. The expectations of the usual suspects, e.g. jobless, scrounging, claiming, is simply staggering.
- This is a no brainer. It beggars belief the amount of money that consecutive governments waste and that it's taken so long to come up with this initiative!

The below shows the response to the Twitter poll.



In summary; the majority of respondents are in favour of changes to the scheme as they would be happy to purchase treatments over the counter and many already do for the self-limiting ailments anyway.

However, there is a clear concern that some treatments are too expensive and those people who are in a position whereby they do not pay for prescriptions would still benefit from accessing the scheme instead of going to the GP.

It is also apparent that the scheme is mostly used by parents who need a quick way to access medication rather than making a GP appointment. This could be possible to reduce the need for the scheme in this group of people by publicising same day appointments for children at GP practices which the CCG is working towards doing. However, keeping the scheme in place for children's remedies may be an option.

Recommendations

From the survey results the below recommendations can be made:

1. Continue with the proposal to remove treatments for self-limiting minor ailments from the scheme.
2. Consider the possibility of removing the scheme altogether other than for those who do not pay for their prescription or for those with young children.

Appendix 1 – Minor Ailment Scheme Survey.

We would like to gather your opinions and experiences of the Minor Ailments Scheme which is currently provided by community pharmacies in Blackpool.

The service is available to residents who:

- Are registered with a local GP taking part in the Minor Ailment Scheme
- Are suffering from a minor illness included in the scheme
- Are entitled to free prescriptions

Eligible people are able to obtain medication, free of charge, from a local pharmacy for the treatment of many common and minor complaints. These are:

- Allergies (hayfever/bites/stings)
- Cold sores
- Colds/flu and/or nasal congestion
- Conjunctivitis
- Constipation
- Cystitis
- Diarrhoea
- Heartburn indigestion
- Headaches
- Mouth ulcers
- Oral thrush
- Short-term pain (for example, resulting from a significant bump, bruise, sprain or strain)
- Sore throat
- Teething pain
- Temperatures
- Threadworm
- Vaginal thrush

In many cases, the ailments for which medication is available on the scheme are self-limiting, meaning that, in time, they will get better without the need for treatment.

In addition to this, the treatments available through the scheme can often be bought over the counter in supermarkets and other high-street retailers because they are deemed safe enough for people to self-manage common and minor ailments. For example, painkillers, hay fever tablets, wart and verruca creams, cough and cold remedies.

When providing items on prescription, the NHS pays both for the actual item of medication plus the additional cost of processing the prescription. The overall cost of a single item when provide via a prescription is therefore far greater than would be incurred by an individual choosing to purchase the item over the counter.

At NHS Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group we have a duty to spend the money we receive from the Government in a fair and efficient way, taking into account the health needs of the whole local community. Like any public body, we must stick within a certain budget and have to decide how we make best use of the money available to us.

Between 30 September 2015 and 1 October 2016, 17,040 Minor Ailments Scheme consultations took place. This equates to an approximate cost of £161,000. (Medicines prescribed cost approx. £110,000 and the consultation fees circa £50,000).

We would like to ask you to take a few minutes to complete the following survey. The feedback gathered from this and other activities which we have planned will help inform decisions about how we best spend the money available to us.

This survey will close on Thursday 10 November 2016.

1. I am completing this survey as:
 - A member of the public (from Blackpool)
 - A member of the public (living outside of Blackpool)
 - Employee of a local pharmacy
 - An NHS staff member
 - A GP or GP practice staff member
 - Representing a group/organisation
 - Representing a group/organisation (please list)

2. Have you used the Minor Ailments Scheme to get medication, free of charge, on prescription through the pharmacy?
 - Yes, quite often
 - Yes, occasionally
 - Not sure
 - Hardly ever
 - No, never

- a. From the best of your knowledge, which of the following ailments have you required medication for?
 - Allergies (hayfever/bites/stings)
 - Cold sores
 - Colds/flu and/or nasal congestion
 - Conjunctivitis
 - Constipation
 - Cystitis
 - Diarrhoea
 - Heartburn indigestion
 - Common and minor headaches
 - Mouth ulcers
 - Oral thrush
 - Short-term pain (for example, resulting from a significant bump, bruise, sprain or strain)
 - Sore throat
 - Teething pain
 - Temperatures
 - Threadworm
 - Vaginal thrush

- b. How willing would you be to purchase the treatments you have previously obtained via the Minor Ailments Scheme over the counter instead?
 - More than happy to self-purchase
 - No problem with purchasing but would still like advice from somebody
 - Unsure

- Unhappy but accepting
- Not happy at all to self-purchase

i. You said that you would be unhappy to purchase medication for common ailments yourself instead of obtaining via the Minor Ailments Scheme, please provide a brief explanation as to why you chose this.

c. Why have you not used the scheme?

- When needed, I tend to purchase medication for minor ailments myself (eg from a supermarket, another high-street shop or pharmacy)
- I didn't know about it
- Other (please specify)

3. Which of the below would you use for advice on how to treat a minor ailment in the first instance?

- NHS choices website
- A local pharmacist
- NHS 111
- Speak to my GP or GP practice staff
- Other (please specify)

4. How willing would you be to purchase the below treatments yourself as opposed to obtaining via a prescription?

	More than happy to self-purchase	No problem with purchasing but would still like access to advice	unsure	Unhappy but accepting	Not happy at all to self-purchase
Allergies (hayfever/bites/stings)					
Cold sores					
Colds/flu and/or nasal congestion					
Conjunctivitis					
Constipation					
Cystitis					
Diarrhoea					
Heartburn indigestion					
Common and minor headaches					
Mouth ulcers					
Oral thrush					
Short-term pain (for example, resulting from a significant bump, bruise, sprain or strain)					
Sore throat					
Teething pain					
Temperatures					

Threadworm					
Vaginal thrush					

- a. If you answered 'unhappy or 'not happy at all' to purchasing some of these medication items yourself, why was this? Please provide a brief explanation

Equality Monitoring Section

About you

Under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, all NHS organisations are required to demonstrate that their processes are fair and that they are not discriminating against or disadvantaging anyone because of their age, disability, gender reassignment status, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. The following information is requested only for monitoring purposes to assist the organisation in ensuring that they are complying with the Equality Act 2010.

Your age

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85 or over
- Prefer not to say

How would you describe your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

Is this the same gender you were given at birth?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

What best describes your marital situation?

- Married
- Civil partnership
- Single
- Prefer not to say

Please choose the category that best describes your level of disability

- No disability
- Learning disability
- Wheelchair user
- Visual impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Physical impairment

- Mental health
- Multiple impairments
- Prefer not to say

Which of the following options best describes your sexual orientation?

- Bisexual
- Gay man
- Gay woman or lesbian
- Heterosexual or straight
- Prefer not to say
- Other

What is your religion/belief?

- Christian
- Jewish
- Hindu
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Buddhist
- No religion/belief
- Prefer not to say
- Other

Which of the following options best describes your ethnicity? *

- White British, English, Northern Irish, Scottish or Welsh
 - White Irish
 - East European
 - Gypsy/Roma/Traveller
 - White other
 - Mixed White/Black African
 - Mixed White/Black Caribbean
 - Mixed White/Asian
 - Mixed other
 - Asian or Asian British – Indian
 - Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
 - Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
 - Asian or Asian British – other
 - Black or Black British – Caribbean
 - Black or Black British – African
 - Black or Black British – other
 - Chinese
 - Any other ethnic group
 - Prefer not to say
-

Appendix 2 – Press release promoting the survey.



NEWS RELEASE

24/10/2016

Views Needed On Prescriptions for Minor Ailments

In an ongoing effort to reduce unnecessary spending, Blackpool doctors are asking residents for their opinion of the local Minor Ailments Scheme.

It was revealed in August that prescriptions from GPs for medications to treat minor ailments cost the local NHS an estimated £800,000 per year. These items, such as, simple painkillers like paracetamol, cough/cold remedies and cold sore treatments are all readily available over the counter in many high street outlets and local pharmacies at relatively cheap prices compared to that incurred by the NHS when obtained via a prescription.

Earlier this year treatments for head lice were withdrawn from the scheme following National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance which favoured the use of wet combing over other treatments. The move has already made a saving and was met with approval from many people the CCG spoke to before implementing.

Now, as the NHS is under continuing pressure, with the demand for services increasing but only limited resources available to cope with this, NHS Blackpool CCG is proposing to withdraw some more of the treatments from the Minor Ailments Scheme.

The scheme which is available to all of the approximate 172,000 people registered with a Blackpool GP, allows individuals to obtain medication for minor and common ailments via a prescription from a pharmacist without the need to see a GP. The ailments covered by the scheme are:

- Allergies (hayfever, bites or stings)
- Cold sores
- Colds/flu and/or nasal congestion
- Conjunctivitis
- Constipation
- Cystitis
- Diarrhoea

- Heartburn indigestion
- Common and minor headaches
- Mouth ulcers
- Oral thrush
- Short-term pain relief (for example, resulting from a significant bump, bruise, sprain or strain)
- Sore throat
- Teething pain
- Temperatures
- Threadworm
- Vaginal thrush

However, in the last year the scheme has been used just 17,000 times, which equates to a cost of £161,000. With this cost and limited usage in mind, the CCG is now looking to gather feedback on potentially withdrawing more treatments from the scheme.

Dr Amanda Doyle, a Blackpool GP and Chief Clinical Officer at NHS Blackpool CCG, said: “We have to make sure every penny is spent wisely and in the most beneficial way for everybody across Blackpool. In order to continue paying for quality services that provide essential health care we have to look at ways to reduce inefficiencies and costs for things which are not clinically necessary.

“More and more people are becoming aware of how to treat minor ailments such as coughs or colds and we know from previous conversations with the public that they are happy to purchase those treatments cheaply over the counter. We want to actively encourage that.”

The CCG is encouraging local people to complete a short survey which can be accessed online at:

www.blackpoolccg.nhs.uk/yourvoice/polls-and-surveys. The survey will close on Thursday 10 November 2016.

Alternatively, paper copies of this survey can be obtained by emailing ccgcomments@blackpool.nhs.uk or calling 01253 951349.

The survey will also be available to complete at one of the CCG’s ‘Your Voice’ drop-in sessions being held during October as follows:

- Tuesday 25 October 2016, 10am - 12noon, Central Library, Queen Street, FY1 1PX.
- Tuesday 1 November, 11am - 1pm, City Learning Centre, Bathurst Avenue, FY3 7RW
- Tuesday 8 November 11am - 1pm, Moor Park Library, Bristol Avenue FY2 OJG

A member of the CCG’s engagement team will be present at the above sessions for anybody wishing to provide additional comments.

Notes to editors:

For further information about this press release please call the communications team at NHS Blackpool CCG on 01253 956594.

Appendix 3: Letter to the LPC

Dear Irfan,

I am writing to you on behalf of NHS Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group in relation to the local Minor Ailments Scheme.

Analysis shows that in 2015/16 around 17,000 consultations were undertaken via the scheme at a cost of £161,000 to the CCG.

Earlier this year treatments for head lice were withdrawn from the scheme in favour of advocating wet combing over other treatments. The move has already made a saving and was met with approval from many people the CCG spoke to before implementing.

Now, with the cost and limited usage of the scheme in mind, we are proposing that further treatments be removed from the scheme and would like to seek your views on which items could potentially be withdrawn.

I am sure you will appreciate that, as a CCG we have a duty to spend the money we receive in the most effective and efficient way for our residents. This is obviously important as the CCG continues to face a financial challenge, with the demand for healthcare services continuing to grow.

I would like to invite you to complete the following short survey via which you can share your views on the scheme and would appreciate if you could also cascade this opportunity across your network: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MinorAilment>

Alternatively paper copies of the survey can be obtained by emailing ccgcomments@blackpool.nhs.uk or calling 01253 951349.

Yours Sincerely

Dr Amanda Doyle
Chief Clinical Officer
NHS Blackpool CCG