



****NEW & UPDATED****

Pathway and management of Depression in Adults in Primary Care

Background

There has been considerable work locally developing pathways of care for patients with depression and common mood disorder. As part of this wider work the prescribing guidelines for treatment of depression in adults in primary care have been updated. Consultation for the new pathway has involved GPs and pharmacists working in the PCNs with patients with depression, expert contributions from our doctor and pharmacist colleagues at NHFT. The guideline has been ratified by Northamptonshire Prescribing Management Group (NPMG) and Northamptonshire Prescribing Advisory Group (NPAG) ([here](#)).

Key Changes in the Guideline

The key changes are as follows:

- Updated information on non-pharmacological support and how to access it.
- Additional information on starting and minimum effective doses.
- Additional information on monitoring and duration of therapy.
- Updated and additional links and resources to enable safe and effective prescribing in patients with depression.

Traffic Light Status Updates

To support prescribers in being able to optimally manage their own patients the traffic light status of both vortioxetine and duloxetine have been updated from AMBER to GREEN when they are used in line with the new guideline; third line treatment of depression.

Vortioxetine offers an alternative to venlafaxine and is frequently better tolerated.

Duloxetine is the preferred choice if neuropathic pain is a predominant co-morbid symptom and in such clinical scenarios it should be used as an alternative to gabapentinoids. This is recommendation within the local guidance is supported by the current NICE guidance on the Pharmacological management of chronic primary pain ([here](#)).

Mental Wellbeing Leaflets

Local work on depression pathways has also led to the development of a Wellbeing Action Plan and Patient Information Leaflet, with information on local provision of support and services, including lifestyle advice.

Ardens

Work is ongoing with Ardens to incorporate the new guideline, formulary choices and provide links to access Wellbeing leaflets.

Philippa Jones, Senior Clinical Pharmacist GPA.