

## Policy: Medication

### Diverse Diagnostics

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<b>Policy Owner / Author:</b>	Dr Jagdish Basra / Dr Camila Flores M.
<b>Target audience:</b>	Staff/All clinical users

## Version Control

Date	Author	Version/Page	Reason for change
18.07.2022	Dr Camila Flores	3	Updating pathway for prescription
08.09.2022	Dr Camila Flores	4	Adding Adults medication
14.11.2022	Dr Camila Flores	5	New private prescription service

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## **1. Introduction**

Diverse Diagnostics provides an online service where we assess Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) among adults and children. Moreover, we also assess other mental health conditions among children and adolescents, including Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other mental health disorders, such as Depression, Anxiety, Tics, Sleep Disorders, and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Following assessments, diagnosis and management plan will be recommended. Patients who need medication as part of their treatment will be able to receive a prescription under Shared Care with their General Physician (GP), OR a private prescription directly from Diverse Diagnostics.

Shared Care means that patients' GP would provide an NHS prescription while patients maintain the follow-up with the child or adult psychiatrist at Diverse Diagnostics (depending on the patient's age), who will recommend the dosage. Therefore, the psychiatrist at Diverse Diagnostics will monitor and recommend whilst the GP would provide the actual prescription based on the recommendations.

Private prescriptions can be provided directly from Diverse Diagnostics under a fee, and patients will be required to pay any pharmacy fees related to their medication. Patients in Glasgow will have a designated pharmacy by Diverse Diagnostics, where prescriptions will be dropped off. In cases where patients come from outside Glasgow, Diverse Diagnostics will send their prescription by recorded delivery, so costs may vary depending on the patient's location.

Moreover, some medications will need a physical health parameters before the start of medicines to ensure patients' safety.

The prescription of medications will be decided, most of the times, according to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidelines. Sometimes, on a case to case basis, some off label prescription may need to be considered, which will be discussed/explained with the patient and it will be detailed in the patient's medical record.

## **2. Purpose of Policy**

Diverse Diagnostics is responsible for providing a proper and effective system to prescribe medicines safely and meet patients' clinical needs. It is important to highlight that Diverse Diagnostics will not handle medicines; we will prescribe medications privately or under Shared Care with the GP. The prescription of medications will comply with national guidance: The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), the British National Formulary (BNF), the British National Formulary for Children (BNFC), and the Scottish Medicines Consortium and Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network.

## **3. Policy Statement**

The management of medications is a multidisciplinary activity involving medical doctors, pharmacists, nurses, and patients. When prescribing, Diverse Diagnostic's primary duty is to ensure that medicines will be prescribed in line with the guidelines within this policy and in an evidence-based, safe, and effective manner. As we provide remote consultations at Diverse Diagnostics, we follow the ten high-level key principles:

1. Our priority is our patients' safety, and we raise concerns if the service or system they are working in does not have adequate patient safeguards, including appropriate identity and verification checks.
2. Understand how to identify vulnerable patients and take the appropriate steps to protect them.
3. At Diverse Diagnostics, we will always provide our professional registration details and will establish a dialogue and make sure the patient understands how the remote consultation is going to be delivered and explain the entire assessment process.
4. Explain that:
  - We can only prescribe if it is safe to do so and only in cases where it is needed.
  - It is not safe if we do not have sufficient information about the patient's health or if remote care is unsuitable to meet their needs.
  - It is unsafe if relevant information is not shared with other healthcare providers involved in their care such as GP. All prescribing or changes to

medication will be communicated via letters to the GP and other appropriate professionals. Both cases will follow this: prescriptions under Shared Care or privately with Diverse Diagnostics.

5. Informed consent and follow relevant mental capacity law and codes of practice. (See Child and Adult: Patient Consent to Medicine Use and Patient Consent to Unlicensed Medicine Use)
6. Undertake an adequate clinical assessment and access medical records when needed or verify important information by examination or testing. (See Procedure section below)
7. Give patients information about all the options available to them, including refusing treatment. Always explain it in a manner that patients will understand.
8. Make appropriate arrangements for aftercare by sharing all relevant information with their GPs to support ongoing monitoring and treatment.
9. Keep notes with a full explanation and justify the decisions made.
10. Keep up-to-date with relevant training, support and guidance for providing healthcare in a remote context.

#### 4. Scope

This policy details the process for prescribing medicines depending on patients' diagnoses.

Diverse Diagnostics will not dispense or store any medicines.

#### 5. Definitions

<b>Term</b> Medicines	<b>Definition</b> According to the Medicines Act 1968: <i>pharmaceutical products in dosage form for administration to human beings</i> . Medical gases, vaccines and preparations of human blood are included in this definition. ( <i>Medicines Act 1968, UK Public General Acts</i> )
<b>Term</b> Controlled drugs	<b>Definition</b> Substances controlled under the provisions of the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) and Regulations made under this act. ( <i>Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, UK Public General Acts</i> )

## 6. Procedure

Diverse Diagnostics will always check patients' identities before the first assessment. We will identify patterns of behaviour that may indicate severe concerns so that appropriate steps can be taken and protect patients. Consent will be asked before the first assessment, and treatment will be explained in detail after the full assessment is completed and the diagnosis is made. As we are currently providing a remote service for ADHD, ASD, Depression, Anxiety, Sleep Disorders, Tics, and OCD, we recognise our limitations at the time of prescribing. Some medicines will require some physical health parameters before prescribing, specifically those for ADHD. Therefore, our procedure of prescription will depend on the medication required:

1. If a patient with ADHD is needing medical treatment, they can receive their prescription via two different pathways:
  - a) Shared Care, a letter will be written to their GP, who can be public or private, asking for shared care before the initiation of medication. However, the psychiatrist at Diverse Diagnostics will monitor the patient and recommend medication dosage, whilst the GP would provide the actual prescription based on the recommendations.
  - b) Private prescription from Diverse Diagnostics. Patients will be charged for the private prescription and they will pay for the pharmacy costs as well. The psychiatrist at Diverse Diagnostics will monitor the patient and prescribe the medication, but it is important to highlight that the patient's GP will receive medication initiation letters and medication review letters with all private prescriptions.

ADHD medications will need a physical examination before taking them, including Blood Pressure, height, weight, and Heart Rate. All these measurements will be taken and plotted on appropriate growth/percentile charts and recorded in the clinical notes at Diverse Diagnostics. Physical observations can be completed by their NHS GP or by private GP practise. If the patient and their family (in young individual cases) feel comfortable and are able to take their own physical

observations at home with the appropriate equipment, this can be discussed with the consultant.

Patients will be referred for a Cardiologist or NHS CAMHS/Paediatric (depending on patient's age), if he/she has any of the following:

- history of congenital heart disease or previous cardiac surgery
- history of sudden death in a first-degree relative under 40 years suggesting a cardiac disease
- shortness of breath on exertion compared with peers
- fainting on exertion or in response to fright or noise
- palpitations that are rapid, regular and start and stop suddenly (fleeting occasional bumps are usually ectopic and do not need investigation)
- chest pain suggesting cardiac origin
- signs of heart failure
- a murmur heard on cardiac examination
- blood pressure that is classified as hypertensive for adults

According to the NICE Guidelines, a young individual must be referred to a paediatric hypertension specialist before starting medication for ADHD if blood pressure is consistently above the 95<sup>th</sup> centile for age and height for children and young people.

When prescribing or changing ADHD dose or medication, physical observations will always have to be completed beforehand. Diverse Diagnostics will undertake the maintenance medication review appointment in both cases: patients under Shared Care or receiving private prescriptions. Moreover, information from all reviews, including changes to medication, will be sent to the GP.

2. If a patient with ASD, Depression, Anxiety, Tics, Sleep Disorders and OCD is required to follow a medical treatment they can receive their prescription via two different pathways:
  - a) Shared Care, a letter will be written to their GP, who can be public or private, asking for shared care before the initiation of medication. However, the psychiatrist at Diverse Diagnostics will monitor the patient and recommend medication dosage, whilst the GP would provide the actual prescription based on the recommendations.
  - b) Private prescription from Diverse Diagnostics. Patients will be charged for the private prescription and they will pay for the pharmacy costs as well. The psychiatrist at Diverse Diagnostics will monitor the patient and prescribe the medication, but it is important to highlight that the patient's GP will receive medication initiation letters and medication review letters with all private prescriptions.

Diverse Diagnostics will undertake the maintenance medication review appointment in both cases: patients under Shared Care or receiving private prescriptions. Diverse Diagnostics will report every change in patient mental state and changes to medications to the GP.

Before we prescribe any medication, we will ensure that we can provide an adequate assessment, establish a dialogue, and obtain the patient's consent. (See Child and Adult: Consent to Medicine Use) Establishing a dialogue with patients is key to helping them consider information about their options; in that way, they can decide whether or not to receive the treatment. This dialogue also allows our health professionals and our patients to ask questions and get more information. Medicine information leaflets will be given to all patients. Moreover, an adequate medical history will be made before any prescription is given, including:

- a) any previous adverse reactions to medicines
- b) current and/or recent use of other medications, including non-prescription and herbal medicines, illegal drugs and medicines purchased online or face to face
- c) other medical conditions

Parents must be warned to keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.

## **7. Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of Dr Jagdish Basra to ensure that all staff has access to this policy.

We will follow any advice of external adviser, once a year, and update policies to provide best practices.

## **8. Enforcement / Compliance**

If there is any detail from our policy that needs to be changed or improved, Diverse Diagnostics is committed to doing it immediately. An independent external adviser will audit our policy and our current practice on an annual basis. Diverse Diagnostics is also committed to keeping up to date with new treatment guidelines.

## **9. Related information**

This policy was written according to the NICE Guidelines, the guidance for good practice in prescribing and managing medicines and devices (General Medical Council), and the legal responsibilities defined in the Medicines Act (1968).

## 10. Appendix

Good practice in prescribing and managing medicines and devices (2021)

[https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/prescribing-guidance-updated-english-20210405\\_pdf-85260533.pdf](https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/prescribing-guidance-updated-english-20210405_pdf-85260533.pdf)

Making decisions using NICE guidelines

<https://www.nice.org.uk/about/what-we-do/our-programmes/nice-guidance/nice-guidelines/making-decisions-using-nice-guidelines#prescribing-medicines>

Medicines optimisation: the safe and effective use of medicines to enable the best possible outcomes

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng5>

Medicines Act 1968

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1968/67/contents>

Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1971/38/contents>

The high-level principles for good practice in remote consultations and prescribing

*Can be downloaded at "Key documents":*

[https://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our\\_work/inspecting\\_and\\_regulating\\_care/independent\\_healthcare/register\\_a\\_new\\_service.aspx](https://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/inspecting_and_regulating_care/independent_healthcare/register_a_new_service.aspx)

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Medication Leaflets, which will be given to parents and patients:

**Fluoxetine (Children)**

<https://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2021/06/Fluoxetine-for-various-conditions.pdf>

**Sertraline (Children)**

<https://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2021/06/Sertraline-for-obsessive-compulsive-disorder.pdf>

**Methylphenidate (Children)**

<https://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2021/08/Methylphenidate-for-attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-ADHD.pdf>

**Methylphenidate (Adults)**

<https://www.nhs.uk/medicines/methylphenidate-adults/>

(Medikinet) 5, 10, 20 mg immediate-release

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/8235/pil#gref>

(Ritalin) 10mg immediate-release

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/1035/pil>

(Ritalin XL) 10, 30, 40, 60 mg modified-release

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/11094/pil>

(Medikinet) 5, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 mg modified-release

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/313/pil>

(Concerta XL) 18, 36, 54 mg prolonged release

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/6872/pil>

Diverse Diagnostics

**Atomoxetine (Atomaid) 10, 18, 25, 40, 60, 80, 100 mg (Adults)**

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/12645/pil>

**Lisdexamfetamine (Children)**

<https://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk/medicines/lisdexamfetamine-for-adhd/>

**Lisdexamfetamine (Adults)**

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/6828/pil>

**Dexamfetamine (Adults)**

(Amfexa) 10mg/20mg tablets

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/7403/pil>

Dexamfetamine Sulfate 5mg tablets

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/11004/pil>

**Guanfacine (Children)**

<https://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk/medicines/guanfacine-for-adhd/>