This resource is designed to help members of the pharmacy team deliver consistent care when engaging in cold and flu consultations and will allow team members to:

- Advise patients on appropriate self care for cold and flu symptoms;
- Discuss appropriateness of antimicrobials in cold and flu management;
- Deliver important cold and flu and public health messages to patients;
- Share advice with patients who are experiencing symptoms of cold or flu, including:
  - Expected duration of symptoms with or without management;
  - Steps to take if symptoms worsen or do not improve;
  - What to do if adverse effects from treatment are experienced;
  - When to ask for advice or seek medical attention;
- Raise awareness of community pharmacy as an easily accessible first point of contact;
- Signpost patients to advice and information about self care.

All members of the pharmacy team have a responsibility to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to provide a consistently high standard of care to patients experiencing cold and flu symptoms.

All members of the pharmacy team should be able to effectively engage in a cold and flu consultation with patients or their carers.
If a patient has pre-selected a cold and flu product to purchase, discuss their symptoms alongside the appropriateness of the product selected; Alternative management options should be presented with reasons why these options may be suitable; Discuss flu vaccine administration as an option once the patient has recovered.

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Some patients require extra consideration or may need referral, including those who: Are young or very old (e.g. ≥65 years of age); Are pregnant or breastfeeding; Have a long-term condition; Are immunocompromised; Are experiencing chest pain, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing or have blood in their sputum; Develop an unusual rash; Have worsening symptoms or have no improvement after seven days. Professional judgement should be used managing these patients.

If a patient has pre-selected a cold and flu product to purchase, discuss their symptoms alongside the appropriateness of the product selected; Alternative management options should be presented with reasons why these options may be suitable; Discuss flu vaccine administration as an option once the patient has recovered.

Professional judgement should be used managing these patients.
By asking the right questions, you can further explore a patient’s problem or symptoms and understand their ideas, concerns, expectations and how the problem is affecting their quality of life.

Many pharmacy teams use the WWHAM (Who? What? How? Action? Medicines?) questioning approach to gather information, but patients may think the scripted nature of these questions feels like an interview and is potentially intrusive — especially if it takes place at the pharmacy counter.

The TED and ICE principles are alternative methods that can be used to invite the patient to share information:

- **T** Can you **T**ELL me why you have come to the pharmacy today?
- **E** Can you **E**XPLAIN who the medicine is for and what the problem is?
- **D** Can you **D**ESCRIPTION your symptoms to me and how long you have had these?
- **I** Do you have any **I**DEAS about what may be causing your symptoms?
- **C** Is there anything that is of **C**ONCERN to you?
- **E** What were your **E**XPECTATIONS from your visit to the pharmacy?

Patients may not understand the differences between general sales list (GSL), pharmacy (P) medicines and prescription-only medicines (POMs).

Pharmacy teams should be able to provide a simple and clear explanation of the main differences, for example:

- **GSL medicines** are available from retail outlets and pharmacies;
- **P medicines** are medicines that can only be sold under supervision of a pharmacist and are only available from the pharmacy counter. These tend to be stronger medicines, contain unique ingredients, and/or come in larger pack sizes;
- **POMs** are medicines that are prescribed and cannot be purchased over the counter.

Consistent messaging around cold and flu and antimicrobial stewardship should be delivered to the public. Signposting patients to written and electronic sources of information is recommended.

Pharmacy teams can read the resources listed below with patients at the pharmacy counter or signpost them to read or refer to when convenient:

- **NHS website**
  - https://www.nhs.uk/

- **NHS ‘Stay well this winter’ campaign**
  - https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/34-stay-well-this-winter-/resources

- **NHS 111**
  - https://111.nhs.uk/

- **Public Health England ‘Treating your respiratory tract infection’**
  - https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/34/resources/4171

- **Public Health England ‘Antibiotic guardian’ campaign**
  - http://linkis.com/antibioticguardian.com/YvqOn

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- bit.ly/PJcoldandflu