



Please note that this document has not been updated for the 2026-27 incentive scheme. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for medicines optimisation switches/reviews, along with other supporting materials, were originally developed for use by Medicines Optimisation Team staff within NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB). Other organisations or groups choosing to use this resource does so at their own risk and NHS SY ICB accepts no liability for its use or application.

SOP Changing medication from a specific brand to the generic alternative V5.0

Rationale

Changing medication from a brand to a generic medicine in line with the South Yorkshire ICS Branded Prescribing Policy <https://www.doncasterccg.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Branded-prescribing-policy.pdf>

The aims of the policy are:

- To provide NHS South Yorkshire partner prescribers with a framework to support generic over brand prescribing.
- To support continuous improvement, the ICB has a range of key performance indicators (KPIs) which it uses for monitoring purposes:
 - Branded prescribing as a % of all medicine prescribing in primary care

Exclusions

- Patients who are recorded as being at end of life
- Previous prescriptions for drug switching stating intolerance or side effect

Standard Operating Procedure

If this is in response to reports based on generic prescribing, the search will need to be built in your individual practice.

- Inform the local community pharmacies when the work is approved to support their stock management processes. This can be undertaken by phone/email or in person.
- **Use exclusions/referral criteria listed at the beginning of this document and determine patients who fall into these categories.**
- Review the patient record for the last 6 months to check for the exclusions or referral required (as detailed in the Patient Data Sheet) including the:
 - Drug history
 - Journal / consultations
 - Letters
 - Summary
 - Allergy box

Further Exclusions:



Patient's allergy status should be checked whilst in the patient record and for any of the following refer to a pharmacist to determine if appropriate to change (the excipients of the switched product may contain ingredients which the patient is allergic to).

- Nut allergy recorded in allergy status box (including any below)
 - Peanut / Peanut oil
 - Pine nut / Rosen
 - Sesame oil
- Soy allergy recorded in allergy status box (including any below)
 - Soy lecithin
 - Soy oil
 - Soy phosphatidylcholine
 - Soybean
- Egg allergy recorded in allergy status box (including any below)
 - Egg protein / ovalbumin
 - Egg lecithin / phospholipids
- Fish allergy recorded in allergy status box (including any below)
 - 0030
 - Protamine
 - Fish oil
- Gelatin allergy recorded in allergy status box
- Milk allergy recorded in allergy status box (including any below)
 - Casamino acids
 - Casein
- Cow's milk allergy recorded in allergy status box (including any below)
 - Lactalbumin
 - Lactose144
 - Lactulose
- Shellfish allergy recorded in allergy status box (including any below)
 - Glucosamine
 - Iodine

For all eligible patients:**Switching:**

- For all eligible patients, enter each individual patient's record consider if where appropriate the generic/ branded switch or Toggle button may be used if not appropriate add a new drug to the patient's repeat medication list as a new item.
- If added as a new drug 'Problem link' the new drug to the same disease as the item being replaced (where possible).
- Check the correct new preparation, quantity and pack size have been entered.
- Remove the original item from current medication list with a brief note to record reason for switch e.g. Product 1 switched to Product 2 as agreed by practice.
- Create consultation / journal entry & add Snomed code SCTID: 408374000 – 'Drug changed to cost effective alternative' to patients record with note Product 1 switched to Product 2 as agreed by practice
- **At this point there may be patients who require exclusion** :-If item not suitable for switch add a brief note saying patient reviewed but not switched, including reason.
- Inform the patient by method agreed with practice:



- SMS /Text / AccuRx message
- Letter (appendix c) **AMEND letter as appropriate**



Appendix a

Practice Consent

Practice Name:

SOP Name: Brand to generic

Tick appropriate method of communication:

- ☐ Practice requires SMS / AccuRx message to be sent sent to patient

Switch message:

Your **Product X** has been changed to the equivalent **Product Y** please see attached letter for further details. **Very important this link expires in 7 days.**

- ☐ Practice requires letter to be sent to patient

Practice Representative Name Consent given: Yes / No

Practice Representative Signature..... Date.....

Please note that the practice representative signing this protocol agrees that:

- The practice will take responsibility for the notification of all relevant practice staff.
- The practice has made patients aware that their records are accessed by staff for these purposes e.g. via practice leaflet, website or other communication and that the practice has applied appropriate restriction to the records of patients who have withdrawn consent.



**Appendix c****SWITCH letter****DO NOT USE MOT HEADER ON PRACTICE LETTERS TO PATIENTS**

Practice header

Dear Patient

As a practice, we are always reviewing our repeat prescriptions to make sure our patients are getting the best, most cost-effective treatment.

NHS South Yorkshire has asked healthcare professionals to prescribe only from a list of carefully chosen products. The idea is to stick to using products which have a proven track record, are good value for money and are in line with local formulary guidance.

INSERT product name have been chosen as the first line treatment option. **INSERT detail**
eg: condition, reasoning as applicable

Your current brand of **AMEND AS APPROPRIATE**
has been changed to **AMEND AS APPROPRIATE**

Your repeat prescription will be changed automatically. **You should carry on using your present brand until they are finished. DELETE if APPROPRIATE**

If you have a medical concern, please contact the practice in your usual way.

The practice