

**Policy Statement;** Prescribing of emollients, soap substitutes, bath oils or shower gels

**Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group does not support the prescribing of emollients, soap substitutes, bath oils or shower gels in patients with dry skin and no diagnosed dermatological condition. Patients with mild to moderate dry skin should purchase their own products. This includes lotions and light creams.**

- Prescribing of emollients is only indicated for a diagnosed dermatological condition. Patients are expected to purchase emollients where there is no diagnosed dry skin condition. Patients with mild eczema may find it easier to purchase own their own emollients OTC.
- Prescribing is not supported for any lotions, except for Dermol lotion (antimicrobial short term use) and patients should be advised to purchase lotions.
- Patients who do not have a diagnosed dry skin condition should purchase their own emollients.

**The prescribing of bath and shower emollients is not supported due to the lack of robust evidence of clinical effectiveness. (NHS England)**

- It is, however, generally accepted that soap is drying and potentially irritating to skin and is best avoided by those with diagnosed dry skin conditions. Therefore people with diagnosed dry skin conditions should be offered an alternative to wash with.

Recommendations:

- Where patients have a diagnosed dry skin condition they should be advised to use leave-on emollients as an alternative to soap. Some formulary emollients can also be used as soap substitutes.
- Where patients choose to use bath and shower emollients they should be advised to purchase it themselves. Regardless of the type of product the person uses to wash with, it should not replace the regular use of a leave-on emollient.

Providers commissioned to provide services on behalf of Mid-Essex CCG are reminded that they are required to follow the Mid-Essex CCG formulary and prescribing guidance as detailed in their contract (Medicines Management Service Specification).

See Mid-Essex CCG website – Medicines optimisation page for all prescribing guidance:

<http://midessexccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services/medicines-optimisation>

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Previous version	Key Changes
N/A	New policy
June 17	Prescribing of bath and shower emollients no longer supported