Policy Statement; Prescribing of low dose naltrexone for the treatment of multiple Sclerosis is not supported.

Mid-Essex Clinical Commissioning Group does not support the prescribing of low dose naltrexone (LDN) for the treatment of Multiple Sclerosis (MS).

The prescribing of naltrexone 4.5mg, 3mg and 1.5mg capsules and liquids at low dose for Multiple Sclerosis is not supported due to limited evidence to support safety and efficacy. LDN is unlicensed in MS and requires ordering as a "specials" product which represents a significant cost, also it is not approved for MS by the MHRA "Currently there is not enough evidence-based information to prove LDN is an effective treatment for MS"

Naltrexone is licensed in the UK to help treat people who are addicted to opiates, such as heroin. Advocates of its use in MS suggest it should be given at a much lower dose (10-50 times lower) for the treatment of MS. Some research suggests that when naltrexone is given at low doses, it triggers the release of factors which may have an anti-inflammatory effect that could be beneficial in the treatment of MS.

In autumn 2011 the MS Society carried out a review of the evidence for LDN as a potential treatment for MS. The main findings in the report about the clinical trials of LDN for people with MS were:

- These trials did not take place over a long enough period to properly assess if LDN is useful for people with MS
- The effects of LDN were not clear: one study reported no benefit to people with MS while the other reported some quality of life benefits
- There was no evidence for the effect of LDN on levels of disability or progression of MS

There is no evidence to indicate what dose of LDN might be most beneficial for people with MS There have been 3 clinical trials of LDN for people with MS. The last trial reported its results in2010http://www.mssociety.org.uk/ms-news-and-research/ms-research/potential-treatments/emerging-areas-of-research/ldn

In existing long term patients do not stop suddenly without a full discussion with the patient and reviewing for clinical appropriateness.

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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n/a	New prescribing statement