

Oral Nutritional Supplement Prescribing Statement

North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Groups no longer support the prescribing of oral nutritional supplements (ONS) outside agreed guidelines. The guidelines are available on the Northern Lincolnshire Area Prescribing Committee website.

Key Recommendations:

1. Oral nutritional supplements (ONS) should not be used as first line treatment. A 'food first' approach should be used initially. This means offering advice on food fortification to increase calories and protein in everyday foods. Additional snacks will be needed to meet requirements for those with a small appetite.
2. NICE Clinical Guideline 32, Nutritional Support in Adults, suggests the following criteria are used to identify those who are malnourished or at nutritional risk:
 - MUST score of 2 or more as generated by the criteria below:
 - Body mass index (BMI) less than 18.5kg/m²
 - Unintentional weight loss more than 10% in the past 3-6 months
 - BMI less than 20kg/m² and an unintentional weight loss more than 5% in the past 3-6 months
3. Once nutritional risk has been established, the underlying cause and treatment options should be assessed and appropriate action taken.
4. Clear treatment goals and a care plan should be agreed with patients. Treatment goals should be documented on the patient record and should include the aim of the nutritional support, timescale, and be realistic and measurable.
5. For all care home residents it is clear that residential and nursing homes are able to provide adequately fortified foods and snacks and prepare homemade milkshakes and smoothies for their residents. With this in mind, it has been agreed that ONS in care homes should **ONLY BE INITIATED BY DIETITIANS.**
6. Where ONS are deemed to be appropriate, a powdered shake should be prescribed unless there are specific reasons why this would not be appropriate.
7. Patients who do not meet ACBS prescribing criteria can also be advised to purchase supplements over the counter or prepare homemade nourishing drinks.
8. All prescribing of ONS must be for a specified period of time, and requires regular reassessment of need.
9. Please note, the guideline does not cover ONS use in those with an eating disorder, such as anorexia nervosa.

For any further advice and guidance, please refer to the agreed guidelines.