

## Unlicensed Specials – Interim Advice during COVID-19 Outbreak

Version 2 (27<sup>th</sup> May 2020)

We have reviewed the current Specials process in light of COVID-19 and the increased workload and potential staff shortages both within Community Pharmacies and NHS Forth Valley Pharmacy Services.

The following amended process has been put in place to help ensure that Community Pharmacists are able to obtain Specials for their patients where clinically required with the minimum of bureaucracy. We will keep the interim process under review as the situation with COVID-19 develops and issue updates when necessary.

We are replacing the current telephone contact number with an email address for unlicensed Specials authorisations and have introduced a form to assist in provision of the correct information: [FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net](mailto:FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net)

**NB:** All requests must be sent from **your Pharmacy Shared NHSmail account** to ensure patient confidentiality.

### For existing authorisations which have expired, price increased or quantity changed

- **If the price has remained the same or is within 20% of the previously authorised price**, the item can be obtained as before. Email [FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net](mailto:FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net) attaching the FV Unlicensed Specials Authorisation Request Form completed with the patient's CHI number, item obtained, quantity prescribed, dose, price, date ordered, existing authorisation code and the GP Practice. This will allow us to update our database.
  - The authorisation will be extended for a 12 month period and the authorisation code will remain the same.
- If the price has increased by more than 20% of the previously authorised price; after checking that the previous price, or the price in the **list of common Specials with current prices**, cannot be obtained elsewhere:
  - Email [FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net](mailto:FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net) attaching the FV Unlicensed Specials Authorisation Request Form completed with the patient's CHI number, item obtained, quantity prescribed, dose, new price quoted, GP Practice and previous authorisation code and associated price. Include your Pharmacy Contractor Code and contact telephone number in your email (we would suggest this is added to your email signature).
  - Someone from the Prescribing Support Team will review the information and either email back with confirmation of authorisation or to discuss further.
  - In the event that you do not hear back from the Prescribing Support Team within 1 working day and the patient needs the item urgently, the item may be ordered **on a one-off basis**. Email [FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net](mailto:FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net) with all of the details as above.

### For new authorisations:

- Check first whether an unlicensed Special is actually necessary or whether an alternative licensed product would meet the patient's needs. Discuss with the GP or Primary Care Pharmacist associated with the Practice.
- Where the unlicensed Special is clinically necessary:

- A **list of common Specials with current prices** has been produced and emailed to Community Pharmacy Shared Mailboxes
  - For items on this list if you can obtain the item **at or below the price listed**, you can go ahead and order the item.
  - The item will be **authorised for a year from the date of ordering**.
  - Email [FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net](mailto:FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net) attaching the FV Unlicensed Specials Authorisation Request Form completed with the patient's CHI number, item obtained, quantity prescribed, price, date ordered and the GP Practice. This will allow us to update our database. You will be sent an authorisation code by email.
  - **If you are unable to source the item at the price listed**, email [FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net](mailto:FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net) attaching the FV Unlicensed Specials Authorisation Request Form completed with the information above and details of the price you have been quoted. Someone from the Prescribing Support Team will then contact you to discuss.
- **For items not included on the list of common Specials**, email [FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net](mailto:FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net) **from your Pharmacy Shared NHSmail account** with the the appropriately completed FV Unlicensed Specials Authorisation Request Form .
- **Someone from the Prescribing Support Team will review the information and either email back with confirmation of authorisation or discuss further.**
- In the event that you do not hear back from the Prescribing Support Team within 1 working day and the patient needs the item urgently, the item may be ordered **on a one-off basis**. Email [FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net](mailto:FV-UHB.FVSpecials@nhs.net) with all of the details as above.