

**Stockton Heath Medical Centre**  
**Policy for Prescribing Oral Anticoagulant Therapy**

**Aim**

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the chance of patients being harmed by the prescribing of oral anticoagulation therapy, by managing the risks associated with this process identified in the National Patient Safety Agency, (NPSA), Alert 18 – Actions that can make anticoagulation safer.

**Newly Prescribed Oral Anticoagulation**

- It is necessary to ensure that patients have received appropriate verbal and written information at the start of their therapy.
- A letter from the anticoagulation clinic should be recorded/scanned into the patient record which gives details of the condition for which the therapy has been prescribed, the therapeutic range expected and the duration of the treatment.

**Repeat Prescribing of Oral Anticoagulation**

- It is necessary to ensure that the patient's International Normalised Ratio, (INR), is being monitored regularly and is within an agreed range.
- When a patient submits a request for repeat medication that includes oral anticoagulant drugs they **must show their Yellow Book to the receptionist**, who will record the date and result of the latest INR on the repeat prescription request sheet and then return the Yellow Book to the patient. This means that patients requesting oral anticoagulant drugs cannot place requests in the post box in the reception foyer.
- Oral anticoagulant therapy will no longer be a repeat item. All requests will be treated as "Acute".
- It is then the responsibility of the doctor printing and signing the prescription to ensure that they are satisfied that the patient is being adequately monitored. The doctor concerned will need to speak to the patient if any doubts or concerns arise.
- **Requests by telephone or email and third party requests for medication, (such as Pharmacist requesting on behalf of a patient),** must include the date and results of the latest INR. This information will need to be added to the patient's medical records, as above. Name/Signature of person taking INR details needs to be added to request slip.
- If the Yellow Book, or latest INR date and result, is not presented, then the patient will need to be contacted by telephone.

- If confirmation of regular monitoring is required, the Anticoagulation Clinic should be contacted, (Telephone 01925 662026).
- If any INR results are telephoned through to the Practice by the hospital laboratory, they should be passed to the Duty Doctor for recording onto the patient medical records and action as appropriate.

### **Co-prescribing of Clinically Significant Interacting Medicines**

Clinicians must be aware that steps are taken to promote safe practice. The patient should be advised of the potential interaction and instructed to inform the INR clinic, to see if any additional monitoring is required. This advice should be recorded in the patient's medical records.

### **Competencies for Clinicians**

All clinicians should complete adequate training, such as the NPSA competency module:

[www.learning.bmj.com/learning](http://www.learning.bmj.com/learning)

Maintaining patients on anticoagulants – How to do it.

### **Competencies for Reception Staff**

All staff involved in the process of issuing repeat prescriptions for oral anticoagulants must be aware of this policy.

### **Review of Oral Anticoagulant Prescribing Policy**

This policy should be reviewed annually, to ensure that the appropriate action and recording is taking place. This may benefit from formal clinical audit.