



### Guidance for Prescribing Emollients

The British Dermatological Nursing Group (BDNG) supports nurses to advocate on behalf of all patients with skin disease. We are concerned that patients are failing to obtain prescriptions for sufficient quantities of the emollient of their choice. Whilst the BDNG acknowledges the guidance provided to Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) by NHS England (2018)<sup>1</sup> we feel it necessary to highlight the requirements of patients with dermatological needs.

Emollients are a fundamental treatment for patients with chronic inflammatory skin conditions<sup>2</sup>. They provide symptomatic relief of dry skin and reduce reliance on topical corticosteroids and antimicrobial prescriptions<sup>3</sup>. Providing prescriptions for suitable emollients is associated with reduced consultations to primary care<sup>3</sup>. Their frequent use requires prescribers to consider their cosmetic appeal and the practical aspects of application to optimise adherence<sup>4</sup>.

To enable equitable care to patients with chronic inflammatory skin disease, please prescribe topical treatments and emollients in line with NICE Guidelines:

- Offer a choice of emollient
- Consider the patients preferred emollient
- Consider that different emollients may be needed for moisturising and washing
- Prescribe appropriate quantities of emollients (this may exceed 500g/week)

For further information please refer to NICE Guidelines on Atopic Eczema and Psoriasis Management<sup>5 6</sup>.

#### References:

1. National Health Service England. (2018). Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs, Available from: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/otc-guidance-for-ccgs.pdf> Accessed on: 26.02.2019.
2. British Dermatological Nursing Group (2012) Best Practice in Emollient Therapy: a statement for healthcare professionals. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Dermatological Nursing, 11 (4) s1-19.
3. Moncrieff G. et al, (2018). Cost and effectiveness of prescribing emollient therapy for atopic eczema in UK, *BMC Dermatology Journal* Available: [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30373584](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30373584) Accessed: 26.02.2019.
4. Antonijević M.D., Owusu-Ware, S. and Banchon-Lopez, B. (2018) Emollient product design: objective measurements of formulation structure, texture and performance, and subjective assessments of user acceptability', *Clinical and Experimental Dermatology*: Available: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/ced.13364> Accessed: 26.02.2019.
5. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. (2007) Atopic eczema in under 12's: diagnosis and management, Available from: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg57> Accessed: 26.02.2019.
6. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. (2012) (updated 2017) Psoriasis: assessment and management, Available from: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg153> Accessed on: 26.02.2019.