



changed to plain tablets, because of high sodium content, which is not good for your blood pressure

- Venlafaxine slow release capsules to venlafaxine slow release tablets (for depression)
- Tamsulosin slow release tablets to slow release capsules
- Doxazosin slow release tablets to immediate release tablets (dosing may change). This switch does not include patients with prostate or kidney problems
- Perindopril arginine changed to perindopril erbumine, a different salt, which is the same medicine.

### Medicines that may require a review by your doctor for an alternative option:

- Certain types of gluten-free products and quantities may be reviewed based on Coeliac Society recommendations
- Tramacet combination medicine may be changed to two separate medicines if this combination is still required.

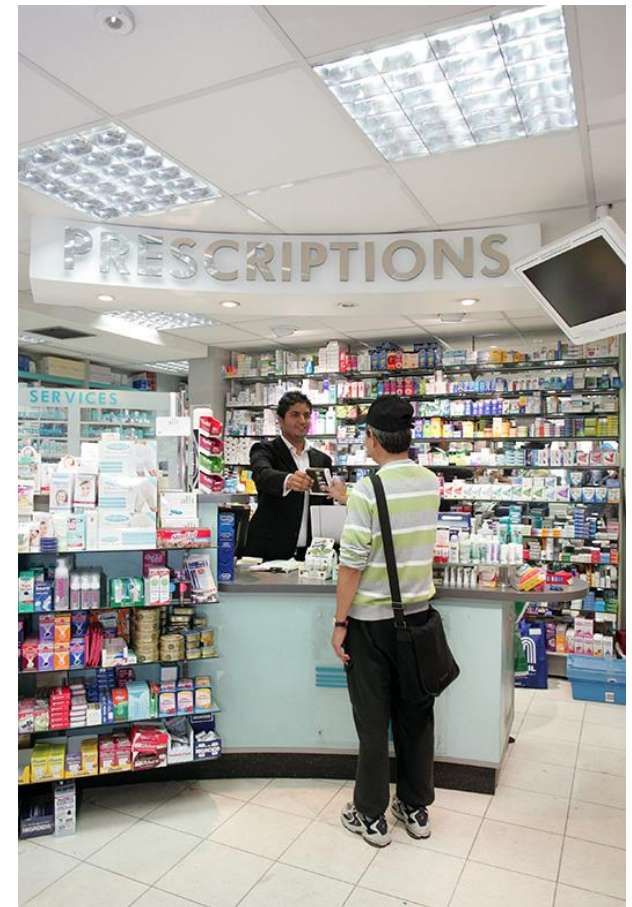
- Emollient creams like aqueous cream, Epaderm or Aveeno may be changed to more cost effective products with similar or equivalent ingredients
- Dosulepin may be reviewed to check if it is still needed
- Lidocaine plasters may be reviewed to check if that is the best treatment option for you
- Wound dressings may be reviewed by the doctor or nurse to check if it is still needed.

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## Understanding generic and branded medicines



## Generic and branded medicines

Medicines can sometimes be confusing, as the same medicine can be called by different names. This is because medicines often have more than one name:

- generic name – is the active ingredient of the medicine
- brand name – is the name given by the manufacturer.

Branded medicines can usually only be made by the parent company, however, after a period of time, it loses its patency, which means that generic versions can be made by different manufacturers.

For example, sildenafil is the generic name of a medicine also known as Viagra<sup>®</sup> which was originally developed by a company called Pfizer. Both medicines have the same active ingredient and the same clinical effect.

This does not affect the clinical effectiveness and quality of the medicine – generic medicines go through the same detailed safety and quality requirements as the original branded product.

## Prescribing of generic medicines

Prescribers (people who prescribe medicines, such as GPs) are encouraged to prescribe medicines by their generic name. This is because generic medicines are as effective as the branded versions, but can cost up to 80% less.



Prescribing generic versions of medicines allows the NHS to reduce the amount of money spent on buying the 'brand' rather than the active medicine.

The money saved by prescribing non-branded medicines allows the NHS to use funds more effectively and can be used to fund a wider range of treatments for a greater number of people.

As part of the NHS Constitution the NHS as a whole has a responsibility to use its public funds in a way which provides the best value for money and the most effective, fair and sustainable use of finite resources. This means that where possible medicines will be prescribed as generic versions.

## What does this mean for Newham patients?

As our NHS strives to secure best value for money it is vital to follow recommended prescribing practices and move towards non-branded medicines. This means that you may see changes to the names of some of your regular medicines.

## Switching to a generic medicine

If your doctor changes your regular prescription from a branded medicine to a generic version, they will talk to you about the change before you collect your prescription. This is to ensure you understand that although your medicine may have a different name, it will still contain the same active ingredient.

Your pharmacist will also be a helpful source of information and advice when this happens. When you pick up your prescription, the medicine may look different and there will be a different name on the label. However, it will contain the same active ingredient as the medicine you used before.

## Medicines that may change

### Medicines that may be changed to a different formulation:

- Metformin slow release to immediate release, which may result in changes to how often it is taken (patients with diabetes)
- Paracetamol and co-codomol soluble