

Position Statement for Prescribing Malaria Prevention Medicines
on the NHS for Travel Abroad

Part of NHS Lambeth CCG's "[Healthier Together](#)" [Five Year Strategy](#) is to deliver best value by ensuring that we live within our means and use our resources well. Therefore to help us deliver our strategy **NHS Lambeth CCG no longer supports the routine prescribing of the following malaria prevention medicines on the NHS locally, for travel abroad:**

- Atovaquone with Proguanil hydrochloride (Malarone®, Mafamoz®, Reprapog®)
- Chloroquine phosphate (Avloclor®, Malarivon®)
- Chloroquine phosphate with Proguanil hydrochloride (Avloclor/Paludrine®)
- Doxycycline
- Chloroquine sulfate (Nivaquine®)
- Mefloquine (Larium®)
- Proguanil hydrochloride (Paludrine®)

Why are we doing this?

- To bring local prescribing practice in line with Department of Health guidance and national prescribing practice
- To help contain the costs of medicines on the local NHS budget
- To free up clinician time for people who have more complex healthcare needs and who need more active support in managing their health
- To ease the pressure on NHS services by reducing demand on prescriber consultation time to support malaria prevention recommendations/requirements for voluntary travel abroad
- To reduce reliance on prescribers to provide prescriptions for malaria prevention medicines that are clinically effective but due to the nature of the product, are deemed a low priority for NHS funding as their use is associated with voluntary travel abroad

The Department of Health issued guidance in February 1995 (FHSL (95)7) which stated that medicines for Malaria prevention no longer needed to be prescribed on an NHS prescription. At the time Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Health Authority made the decision to continue providing malaria prevention medicines on NHS prescription due to the high number of imported cases of malaria in our boroughs. Following review by Public Health Lambeth, evidence has shown that the number of cases of malaria across Lambeth has fallen significantly from levels 20 years ago, when the arrangements were introduced, due to a variety of factors. As a result, NHS Lambeth CCG no longer supports the routine prescribing

of malaria prevention medicines on the NHS locally, for travel abroad.

Further information can be found in our NHS Lambeth CCG Governing Body Meeting in Public Report [Proposals for local guidance on NHS Prescribing in Lambeth. June 2016](#)

- NHS patients are entitled to receive free advice on malaria prevention.
- Ensure patients are fully informed of the importance of appropriate malaria prevention in order to reduce the risk of disease.
- Patients should be advised about the importance of mosquito bed nets, suitable clothing and insect repellents such as DEET, to protect against being bitten in line with the Public Health England ABCD of malaria prevention:
 - be **A**ware of the risks
 - use **B**ite prevention
 - take **C**hemoprophylaxis (malaria tablets)
 - seek early **D**agnosis if you become unwell
- Information on which malaria prevention medicines are necessary or recommended for the areas your patients will be visiting is available from:
 - Travel Health Pro (<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>)
(previously known as National Travel Health Network and Centre, NaTHNaC)
 - Travax (<http://www.travax.nhs.uk/malaria.aspx>)
 - Fit for Travel (www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice.aspx)
- Patients should be advised to purchase or obtain sufficient prophylactic medicines to cover the period of travel, taking into account that malaria prevention medicines are commenced prior to travel, are taken whilst away and continued on return from travel.
- Patients may purchase “Pharmacy only” malaria prevention medicines such as chloroquine (Avloclor ®), proguanil (Paludrine ®), chloroquine with proguanil (Avloclor/Paludrine ®) and atovaquone with proguanil ([Maloff Protect](#) ®) from a pharmacy.
Prescription only medicines for malaria prevention such as doxycycline, Mefloquine (Larium ®) and atovaquone with proguanil (Malarone ®, Mafamoz ®, Reprapog ®) must be prescribed on a private prescription.
- The NHS Standard General Medical Services Contract 2014 states that a GP may accept a fee for prescribing or providing drugs or medicines for malaria prevention.
- The fee should be determined by the practice; it is advisable to develop a practice

protocol available to patients in the form of a leaflet or section on the practice website.

- Practices should also give the patient written information on the dosing schedule proposed and the charges involved at the outset of the process.
- If a private prescription to obtain the malaria prevention medicines is being provided, patients should be advised to compare prices as there may be variation in the amount that individual pharmacies will charge to supply the medicines.
- If a practice does not wish to provide a private service for the above mentioned malaria prevention medicines, patients should be advised that they may obtain advice and malaria prevention medicines from private travel clinics and community pharmacies.
- Public Health England has developed practical guidelines for use by healthcare professionals advising travellers on malaria prevention.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/malaria-prevention-guidelines-for-travellers-from-the-uk>

- Public Health England has developed the following leaflets to share with patients:

➤ Malaria: information for people travelling overseas

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/malaria-information-for-people-travelling-overseas>

➤ Travelling overseas to visit friends and relatives?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/travelling-overseas-to-visit-friends-and-relatives-health-advice>

Guidance for patients, carers and guardians

- NHS patients are entitled to receive free advice on malaria prevent for travel abroad.
- Seek travel health advice at least 4-6 weeks before travel, but even if time is short it's never too late to get advice
- Community pharmacists can offer travel health advice and sell some malaria prevention medicines. You do not need to make an appointment to see the pharmacist, and many pharmacies are open late nights and at the weekend when the doctor's surgery is closed.

You can also seek travel health advice and malaria prevention medicines from your GP practice or travel clinic

- A charge may be applied by your GP practice for prescribing "prescription only" malaria prevention medicines on a private prescription. The level of charge applied is at the discretion of the GP practice.

- If you are travelling to an area where mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria exist, make sure you take insect bite avoidance measures including using an insect repellent, covering exposed areas of skin and sleeping under a mosquito bed net.
- A combination of preventive measures will give significant protection against malaria.
- If malaria prevention medicine is required this should be purchased from a reputable source in the UK before travel due to the possibility of medicines being fake or sub-standard abroad.
- Do not assume that you have immunity to diseases such as malaria just because you have previously travelled to or lived in the country you plan to visit. Immunity is rapidly lost after migration to the UK.
- Advice related to malaria prevention, vaccinations and travel health is also available from:
 - Travel Health Pro (<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>)
 - Fit for Travel (www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice.aspx)
 - NHS Choices (<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions>)
 - Gov.uk – Foreign travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>)
 - NHS Lambeth CCG (<http://www.lambethccg.nhs.uk/your-health/keeping-well>)
- Public Health England has developed practical guidelines for use by healthcare professionals advising travellers on malaria prevention but these may also be used by travellers who wish to read about options themselves.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/malaria-prevention-guidelines-for-travellers-from-the-uk>

Comments or complaints

We do all we can to provide good quality health services, but sometimes things don't go as they should. We welcome people telling us about how we can improve, or make a complaint about the service they have received from NHS Lambeth CCG.

We are also very pleased to receive positive feedback and compliments about our work or the quality of health services received as a local resident.

North East London Commissioning Support Unit (NEL CSU) complaints team is responsible for managing the complaints process on behalf of NHS Lambeth CCG.

The team can also give you general advice about the complaints procedure.

Tel: 0800 4561517

Email: NELCSU.SEcomplaints@nhs.net

Write to: NEL Complaints Team, 1 Lower Marsh, London, SE1 7NT

References:

- Department of Health Family Health Services Letter [FHSL (95) 7]. Malaria Prophylaxis: Regulation permitting GPs to charge for prescribing or providing anti-malarial drugs. February 1995.
[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20030731083224/http://www.info.doh.gov.uk:80/doh/coin4.nsf/page/FHSL-\(95\)7?OpenDocument](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20030731083224/http://www.info.doh.gov.uk:80/doh/coin4.nsf/page/FHSL-(95)7?OpenDocument)
- GMS Regulations (Schedule 5, paragraph 1 (I)) 1st March 2004.
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/291/schedule/5/made>
- Public Health England Guidelines for malaria prevention in travellers from the UK 2016. January 2017.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/malaria-prevention-guidelines-for-travellers-from-the-uk>