

Position Statement – Vitamin D supplementation for insufficiency

East & North Herts CCG does not support prescribing of vitamin D supplements (10 micrograms/400 units dose) intended to treat insufficiency.

This includes all patients resident within a care home setting.

Recommendations

- The Government and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) both advise that care home providers are expected to support people’s full nutritional needs, which includes supplementation with vitamin D throughout the year as recommended by Public Health England
- Care Homes are required to purchase and provide suitable vitamin D supplements (these may include tablets, liquid or oral sprays) for residents
- Any requests to GP practices to prescribe 10 micrograms/400 units vitamin D supplements for care home residents should be declined and care homes should be directed to purchase products themselves

Background

In 2016 Public Health England issued guidance that population groups at increased risk of vitamin D deficiency (such as people who are confined indoors, including those in care homes) should take a daily 10 micrograms/400 units vitamin D supplement throughout the year.

In early 2021, in response to the global pandemic, the [Department of Health and Social Care](#) made the decision to provide a free 4 month supply of vitamin D to all care home residents.

At the same time, the [Care Quality Commission](#) made it clear that care homes “*should consider how to support people to continue to take vitamin D when the free supplies end.*” because “*Care home providers are required to meet resident’s full nutritional needs to sustain life and good health, and reduce the risks of malnutrition, in line with regulation 14 (Part A) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. In addition to provision of nutritious meals, this includes food supplements where necessary, such as vitamin D.”*

Guidance for care homes

Free Government supply of vitamin D drops was a one off provision therefore it is essential that your Home/ organisation has established how it will meet residents vitamin D needs from now on.

10 micrograms/400 units vitamin D products:

- Are widely available to purchase in supermarkets, pharmacies and online
- Can be purchased in the following forms and at low cost
 - Drops – available from <£0.01 per person, per day (1 drop)
 - Tablets – available from <£0.02 per person, per day (1 tablet)
 - Sprays – available from <£0.05 per person, per day (1 spray)

Some manufacturers may offer bulk buy discounts, so actual cost of provision may be less than the retail costs quoted above.

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