

Prescribing Appropriateness Indicators: Operational Definitions

1. The indication for the drug is recorded and upheld in the BNF.

1. The indication recorded in the patient medical record for the drug is valid.
2. The indication recorded in the patient medical record for the drug is invalid.
3. There is no indication recorded in the patient medical record for the drug.

2. The reason for prescribing a drug of limited value is recorded and valid.

According to the BNF, the drug is of limited or no clinical value i.e. "it is considered by the Joint formulary Committee to be less suitable for prescribing". Their use may be justifiable under certain circumstances, which should be clearly documented in the patient medical records.

1. The drug is not listed in the BNF as being of limited value.
2. The drug is listed in the BNF as being of limited value and the prescriber records a valid reason in the patient medical record.
3. The drug is listed in the BNF as being of limited value, but the prescriber records an invalid reason in the patient medical record.
4. The drug is listed in the BNF as being of limited value, but the prescriber does not record any reason for its use in the patient medical record.

Less suitable drugs, by BNF chapter

BNF chapter	Drug name	Recommendation
4.1.1	Antihistamines	Not recommended for GAD (inc. Panic Disorder)
	Hypnotics	Not recommended for chronic insomnia
4.1.3	Barbiturates	Not recommended (unless patient is already taking them for severe intractable insomnia)
	Meprobamate	Not recommended
4.3.1	Amytriptyline	Not recommended for depression
	Dosulepin	Not recommended for depression – should only be prescribed by specialists
4.3.2	Mono Amine Oxidase Inhibitors	Should only be prescribed by specialists
4.4	Amfetamines	Should not be used to treat depression, obesity, senility, debility, or for relief of fatigue.

3. A generic product is prescribed, if one is available.

1. The patient is prescribed a generic product.
2. The patient is not prescribed a generic product, but there is no generic product available.
3. The patient is not prescribed a generic product, where one is available.

4. If a potentially hazardous drug-drug combination is prescribed, the prescriber shows knowledge of the hazard.

A potentially hazardous drug-drug combination is defined as one that is marked with the 'black dot' symbol in Appendix 1 of the BNF. The prescriber shown knowledge of the hazard by e.g. increased monitoring of the effects of the affected drug.

1. The patient is not prescribed an interacting combination of drugs.
2. The patient is prescribed an interacting combination of drugs and the prescriber shows knowledge of the potential hazard.
3. The patient is prescribed an interacting combination of drugs and the prescriber does not show knowledge of the potential hazard.

5. If the total daily dose is outside the range stated in the BNF or SPC (see appendix x), the prescriber gives a valid reason.

1. The patient is prescribed a dose within the range stated in the BNF.
2. The patient is not prescribed a dose within the range stated in the BNF and the prescriber records a valid reason in the patient medical record.
3. The patient is not prescribed a dose within the range stated in the BNF and the prescriber records an invalid reason in the patient medical record.
4. The patient is not prescribed a dose within the range stated in the BNF, but the prescriber does not record any reason in the patient medical record.
5. There is no indication recorded in the patient medical record for the drug or the indication is invalid.