

High-Risk Medication & Deprescribing Policy

The Robert Street Practice

Purpose

This policy outlines the practice approach to the safe prescribing, monitoring, and reduction of **high-risk medications**, including controlled drugs, opioids, and gabapentinoids.

It ensures:

- Patient safety
 - Compliance with UK national clinical guidelines
 - Consistent and safe prescribing practices
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Scope

This policy applies to:

- All clinicians involved in prescribing medications
 - All patients prescribed high-risk medications, including:
 - Opioids (e.g. morphine, tramadol, codeine, fentanyl)
 - Gabapentinoids (gabapentin, pregabalin)
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Policy Statement

The Robert Street Practice operates a **strict prescribing framework** for high-risk medications in order to:

- Minimise harm and dependency risks
 - Promote evidence-based prescribing
 - Encourage safer alternatives where appropriate
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Prescribing Principles

1. Mandatory Clinical Reviews

- Repeat prescriptions from previous practices will **not automatically be continued**
 - All patients must undergo a **clinical consultation** with a GP or practice pharmacist before further prescriptions are authorised
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2. Deprescribing and Tapering

- The practice will actively **reduce and deprescribe** long-term opioid and high-risk medication use where clinically appropriate
 - Patients may be placed on a **structured tapering programme**
 - Prescribing decisions will be based on:
 - Current clinical evidence
 - Patient safety
 - Clinical judgement (not historical prescribing patterns)
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3. Lost, Stolen, or Early Requests

- The practice operates a **zero-tolerance policy** for:
 - Early refills
 - Emergency re-issues
 - Lost, misplaced, or stolen medication will **not be replaced before the next due date**
 - This applies **even where a police crime reference number is provided**
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4. Safer Alternatives and Patient Engagement

- High-dose or unsafe prescribing will **not be issued**
 - Patients are expected to engage with **alternative care pathways**, including:
 - Non-opioid treatments
 - Physiotherapy
 - Lifestyle and self-management strategies
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Non-Compliance

Failure to engage with this policy may result in:

- Changes to prescribing arrangements
 - Reduction or discontinuation of medication
 - Increased clinical monitoring
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Practice Commitment

The Robert Street Practice is committed to:

- Delivering safe, evidence-based care
 - Reducing harm from high-risk medications
 - Supporting patients through safe deprescribing processes
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Further Information

Patients who have concerns about their medication or treatment plan are encouraged to **contact the practice** to discuss this with a clinician.
