



Medicines of Low and Limited Clinical Value (MOLLCV)

Low Clinical Value – PROBIOTICS (VSL#3 & Vivomixx)

Classification - Items of low clinical effectiveness, where there is a lack of robust evidence of clinical effectiveness or there are significant safety concerns.

The Scottish Government has published [Medicines – Achieving Value and Sustainability in Prescribing Guidance](#). This guidance aims to reduce the use of low value medicines and ensure the effective use of medicines with limited clinical value throughout NHS Scotland.

Scottish Government have classified PROBIOTICS (VSL#3 and Vivomixx) as a medicines of low clinical value which should no longer be prescribed.

ACTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- SHARE** – ensure all prescribers are aware of these national recommendations
- STOP** – do not prescribe PROBIOTICS for any new patients
- REVIEW** – existing patients prescribed PROBIOTICS (VSL#3 & Vivomixx) should be reviewed and deprescribed, where safe to do so.

Background Information:

- Probiotics are live micro-organisms that are thought to restore the natural balance of bacteria in the gut, there are currently no probiotic products licensed as medicines.
- The Advisory Committee on Borderline Substances (ACBS) reviewed the probiotic products VSL#3® and Vivomixx™ and concluded that the evidence available did not sufficiently demonstrate that the products are clinically effective resulting in their removal from the drug tariff.
- Probiotic preparations are available to purchase over the counter as supplements but [PrescQIPP](#) state patients should be advised of the lack of sufficient evidence to support their use.

Prescribing Information:

NHS Grampian currently only has 8 patients prescribed PROBIOTICS.

Recommendations:

Scottish Government guidance states that all patients prescribed this product should be reviewed, and deprescribed where safe to do so.

GP Practices are requested to consider this information and appropriate actions they may wish to take noting their prescribing of these low value products. This work stream is acknowledged as optional, as there are no supporting financial resource, but may fit well with patient reviews already scheduled for those patients prescribed these products.

Resources to support deprescribing, such as patient letters are available that make it clear that changes to the prescribing of these products are part of a national programme. These are accessible on Grampian Guidance, Pharmacy & Medicines Management, Primary Care Patient letters.

Monitoring of MOLLCV will be undertaken centrally, with practices receiving information regarding their prescribing on a bi-annual basis.

Information extracted from Scottish Government: [Items of Low and Limited Clinical Value - Medicines - achieving value and sustainability in prescribing: guidance - gov.scot](#)