

## Somerset Principles of shared care for formulary Amber drugs.

**Formulary Amber traffic light drugs** – with formal contractual shared care protocol, must be initiated by a specialist and patient stabilised on treatment for a set time period after which the patient's GP practice can be requested to support ongoing treatment through prescribing and clear monitoring arrangements for both primary care and specialist care.

**Formulary Amber traffic light drugs** – without formal protocol, may be initiated specialist or by patient's GP practice on the advice of a specialist and GP practice supports ongoing treatment through prescribing and clear monitoring arrangements for both primary care and specialist care.

<https://nhssomerset.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/Somerset-Traffic-Light-System-56th-Edition-August-2023.pdf>

**Implicit in shared care arrangements for Amber drugs is that the patient continues to be followed-up by the specialist so is never 'discharged' but is 'transferred to shared care'.**

Specialist follow up may be at set regular periods, flexible, patient initiated or GP practice requested.

Somerset works on the agreed long-standing presumption that GP practices will accept shared care for Amber drugs. (Rarely a patient's GP may decide not to share-care because they do not feel they can accept responsibility, or they feel insufficiently competent, on an individual complex case basis.)

Somerset has deliberately reduced the number of **Formulary Amber traffic light drugs** – with formal contractual shared care protocol to an essential list;

<https://nhssomerset.nhs.uk/prescribing-and-medicines-management/shared-care/>

Somerset GP practices and specialist teams should always aim to locally resolve any issues where shared care arrangements appear not to be followed or are not working in the patient's best interests.

Ultimately if these issues cannot be locally resolved then shared care for any **Amber traffic light drug** may be suspended by the GP practice and care (including prescribing and monitoring) returned to the specialist team.

Please contact the ICB medicines Management team if you have any questions.  
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