

Millfield Surgery – Website Version

Shared Care Agreements & Specialist Medication Policy

What is a Shared Care Agreement (SCA)?

A Shared Care Agreement is an NHS arrangement where a specialist asks a GP practice to take over prescribing a medication they have initiated. This is a *request*, not a requirement. Millfield Surgery will only accept shared care when it is clinically safe and appropriate.

The prescriber issuing the medication is responsible for ensuring it is safe, appropriate, and monitored correctly. This requires adequate knowledge, training, and capacity.

What are specialist medications?

Some medications started by specialist NHS teams do not have a Shared Care Agreement. These drugs may be complex to dose, used off-licence, or require regular specialist monitoring such as blood tests or physical checks.

Our Policy

Millfield Surgery does **not** take on specialist prescribing outside of a formal NHS Shared Care Agreement with appropriate specialist support and funding.

We have updated our position on specialist medications initiated by:

- Private clinics
- Right to Choose providers
- NHS services without a prescribing or monitoring team

This aligns with local practices and LMC guidance. Patient safety is our priority. Prescribing specialist medications without robust specialist oversight carries significant risk.

Monitoring these medications requires time, expertise, and careful review of results. General Practice has limited resources, and allocating large amounts of clinician time to specialist prescribing may reduce the number of GP appointments available to all patients.

Why do some practices prescribe these medications when we do not?

Each practice has different staffing, expertise, and capacity. Where we believe there is insufficient specialist support or safe monitoring arrangements, we will decline to prescribe.

We are working with our local ICB and NHS partners to encourage safe, well-resourced pathways. Patients should be stabilised on treatment by a specialist and followed up regularly under an NHS Shared Care Agreement.

Our goal is to ensure patients with complex needs receive appropriate specialist care.

Right to Choose and Private Providers

Millfield Surgery will **not** take over prescribing under Shared Care Agreements originating from private or Right to Choose clinics.

If these services cannot prescribe or monitor the medication themselves, we can refer patients to locally commissioned NHS services where appropriate.

Patients considering private or Right to Choose assessments should be aware of this policy before proceeding.

Further Information

GMC Guidance on Shared Care <https://www.gmc-uk.org/professional-standards/the-professional-standards/good-practice-inprescribing-and-managing-medicines-and-devices/shared-care>