

PHARMACY FIRST: SORE THROAT GATEWAY

For acute sore throat, Pharmacy First can now be **claimable** even when the outcome is self-care advice

Why this matters!



NHS England updated Pharmacy First pathways and PGDs to improve safety and consistency, and to make gateway/claiming rules clearer. Red flags/escalation are set out, and assessment is recognised even when self-care is appropriate.

Acute sore throat pathway - what has changed?

New gateway: FeverPAIN 2-3 (self-care advice can be claimable)

The acute sore throat pathway now includes a gateway point for patients with FeverPAIN score 2-3. This means a Pharmacy First claim may be made even when the outcome is self-care advice (no antibiotic supplied), as long as the pathway criteria are met and the consultation is recorded correctly.



New gateway: returning patients (after self-care)

A gateway point has also been added/clarified for patients who return after trying self-care (e.g., symptoms not improving).

This supports the follow-up being recorded and claimed where the pathway criteria are met.

Manage “returns after self-care” as a structured follow-up

What pharmacies should do differently (Sore throat: advice-only consultations)

Use FeverPAIN consistently

Record a FeverPAIN score for every sore throat consultation. FeverPAIN 2-3 links to the self-care gateway, so advice-only may be claimable.



Self-care advice + safety-netting (record it)

Provide clear self-care advice (including regular analgesia) and record it.

Record safety-netting: what to watch for, when to seek urgent care, and when to re-present.

Don't miss the monthly payment

20-29 = £500 | 30+ = £1,000

Check totals week 3/4 and take action before month-end

REMINDER

IMPORTANT

Important reminder (PGD / pathway documents)

NHS England PGDs and pathways are the definitive requirements for clinical and claiming decisions. Ensure these are read and acknowledged/signed under your local governance.

This supports quicker access for patients to the right care in the right setting.