

# NEL Prescribing and Medicines Newsletter

## April 2026

### Updates for Community Pharmacy across North East London

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## 1. Important Update: Levemir® (Insulin Detemir) Discontinuation

Novo Nordisk is discontinuing **Levemir® Penfill®** and **Levemir® FlexPen®**. A recent [Medicines Supply Notification](#) highlights that, although UK stock is currently anticipated to last until December 2026, there is an increasing risk of earlier stock depletion, reinforcing the need for timely and coordinated switching.

Please refer to the [NEL Guidance note](#) for more information.

There is no direct switch for Levemir® (insulin detemir). Patients will need careful switching and additional monitoring when moving to alternative insulin products.

#### Actions for Community Pharmacy Teams:

- If a prescription for Levemir® is received:
  - Advise the patient that their **GP or diabetes specialist will contact them to discuss an alternative insulin.**
  - Reassure the patient that they **will continue to receive insulin treatment.**
  - Explain that Levemir® will be discontinued by **December 2026.**

## 2. London-wide medicines waste campaign

From March to May 2026, NHS organisations across London are promoting the “**Only order what you need**” campaign to help reduce unnecessary medicines waste.

Patients are encouraged to:

- Check existing supplies of medicines before reordering and only request what they still need
- Speak to their GP about a medication review if medicines are no longer being used, to make sure their prescription is right for them
- Check their prescription bag before leaving the pharmacy

- Return unwanted or unused medicines at their local community pharmacy for safe disposal

How **Pharmacies** can support this campaign:

- Reinforce these key messages to patients
- Encourage patients to only order what they need
- Display campaign posters in the pharmacy
- Access and download campaign materials in the link below:

Find out more and help share the message: [Only order what you need – North East London](#)

### 3. Funding Opportunity – Community Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship Programme 2026

The 2026 Community Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship Programme (CPTAP) has now launched, supporting employers to recruit and train Pre-registration Trainee Pharmacy Technicians (PTPTs) through a two-year apprenticeship. A funding contribution of £15,505 per trainee per year is available to support delivery of a GPhC-compliant training programme. Application of Funding (AoF) requests must be submitted via the [regional online application form](#).

Applications open **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2026** (9am) and close **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026** (midday).

Engagement sessions (MS Teams):

National	Regional
<b>Tuesday 21 April, 12pm to 12.30pm</b> – Register <a href="#">here</a>	<b>Wednesday 29 April, 1pm to 2pm</b> – Register <a href="#">here</a>
<b>Thursday 23 April, 8pm to 8.30pm</b> – Register <a href="#">here</a>	<b>Thursday 14 May, 12pm to 1pm</b> – Register <a href="#">here</a>

Guidance to support completion of an application, along with further programme information, is available [here](#). If you have any questions, please contact [england.wtepharmacy.london@nhs.net](mailto:england.wtepharmacy.london@nhs.net) with “Community Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeship Programme 2026” in the subject field.

### 4. Guidance Note for the Prescribing Intervals of Repeat Prescriptions

NEL ICB has published guidance on repeat prescribing intervals to support safe, effective and proportionate prescribing across North East London. The guidance recommends 28 day prescribing as the usual interval where clinically appropriate, with flexibility for up to 56 days for stable patients on non-complex regimens. Exceptions are included, where it is specifically informed by professional clinical judgement or for medicines that come in special pack sizes. It also reinforces limits for controlled drugs (maximum 30 days) and encourages use of electronic repeat dispensing ([eRD](#)) where appropriate. Please see for more information [Prescribing information – North East London](#)

### 5. Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAs) Update

Clinicians in primary care can now access the approved [NEL prescribing guidance for Adrenaline Auto-Injectors \(AAs\)](#). The recorded session is available to watch on the NEL YouTube Channel—click here to view.: <https://youtu.be/s8HGyk776MM>

## 6. Structured Medication Reviews (SMRs) in Problematic Polypharmacy: Antimicrobial Focus

This will be a facilitated case-based discussion about the complexities of managing problematic polypharmacy and deprescribing, in patients on antimicrobials, with a specific focus on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and acne. Please visit the [event page on the SPS website](#) for registration and access details.

**Tuesday 12th May 1-2pm.**

## 7. Contact Details and Additional Resources

### CONTACT DETAILS

<b>NEL ICB Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation Team</b>	<b>For prescribing and medicines enquiries:</b> <a href="mailto:nelondonicb.prescribingqueries@nhs.net">nelondonicb.prescribingqueries@nhs.net</a>
<b>Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) Medicines Advice</b>	For all patient specific clinical queries please use the following SPS contact: <a href="mailto:askspnhs@sps.direct">askspnhs@sps.direct</a>
<b>For all enquires, reporting concerns or incidents relating to Controlled Drugs</b>	<a href="mailto:england.londonaccountableoffice@nhs.net">england.londonaccountableoffice@nhs.net</a> <b>Report CD incidents</b> using the national reporting tool <a href="http://www.cdreporting.co.uk">www.cdreporting.co.uk</a>

### RESOURCES

For <b>NEL Joint Formulary</b>	<a href="https://www.nel-jointformulary.nhs.uk">https://www.nel-jointformulary.nhs.uk</a> User guide: <a href="#">NEL netFormulary User Guide FINAL .pdf</a> Training video: <a href="#">NEL netFormulary Training webinar</a>
For <b>Pharmacy &amp; Medicines Optimisation Team Resources</b>	<a href="https://primarycare.northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/home/meds/">https://primarycare.northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/home/meds/</a>
For <b>PGD Updates</b>	UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – <a href="#">click here</a> SPS – <a href="#">click here</a> NHS England (NHSE) – <a href="#">click here</a>
For <b>Medicine Supply Shortages</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a> for <b>SPS Medicines Supply Tool</b> which offers up-to-date information on Medicines Shortages, provided by DHSC and NHSE/I.  <a href="#">Register</a> with SPS free-of-charge to access.
For <b>MHRA information</b>	For all MHRA updates on alerts, recalls and safety information on drugs and medical devices <a href="#">Alerts, recalls and safety information: drugs and medical devices - GOV.UK</a>
<b>Learn from Patient Safety Events Service (LFPSE)</b>	For reporting patient safety incidents and misses <a href="#">NHS England » Learn from patient safety events (LFPSE) service</a>
For <b>Medicines Safety Tools - PrescQIPP</b>	<a href="#">PrescQIPP - Medicines safety</a>
For <b>reporting suspected adverse effects/defects of medicines or devices – Yellow Card Scheme</b>	<a href="#">Yellow Card   Making medicines and medical devices safer</a>

#### [For your information:](#)

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