

# Patient Group Direction

For the supply of

**Clotrimazole 500 mg vaginal pessary**

By registered community pharmacists providing the  
NHS Wales Clinical Community Pharmacy Service for  
the treatment of **vulvo-vaginal candidiasis**  
in Powys Teaching Health Board

Operational from: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023

Review Date: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026

Version number: 1.0

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as part of the Community Pharmacy Common Ailment Service  
Valid from: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 Expiry Date: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026*

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Valid From 01/07/2023  
Review date 31/03/2026  
Expiry Date 30/06/2026

## PGD for the supply of clotrimazole 500 mg vaginal pessary for the treatment of vulvo-vaginal candidiasis by pharmacists delivering the Common Ailment Service component of the Clinical Community Pharmacy Service

Reference: Clotrimazole 500 mg vaginal pessary PGD  
 Version no: 1.0  
 Valid from: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023  
 Review date: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026  
 Expiry date: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026

### Welsh Medicines Advice Service has developed this PGD for local authorisation

Those using this PGD must ensure that it is authorised by the Local Health Board in which they are operating and signed in section 2 by an appropriate authorising person, relating to the class of person by whom the product is to be supplied, in accordance with the Human Medicines Regulations 2012 (HMR2012)<sup>1</sup>. **THE PGD IS NOT LEGAL OR VALID WITHOUT SIGNED AUTHORISATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH HMR2012 SCHEDULE 16 Part 2.**

Authorising organisations must not *alter*, *amend* or *add* to the *clinical* content of this document. Such action will invalidate the *clinical sign-off* with which it is provided.

As operation of this PGD is the responsibility of service providers, the authorising organisation can decide which staff groups, in keeping with relevant legislation, can work to the PGD.

### INDIVIDUAL PRACTITIONERS MUST BE AUTHORISED BY NAME, UNDER THE CURRENT VERSION OF THIS PGD BEFORE WORKING ACCORDING TO IT.

Practitioners and organisations must check that they are using the current version of the PGD. Amendments may become necessary prior to the published expiry date.

Any queries regarding the clinical content of this PGD should be addressed to: [welshmedicines.information@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:welshmedicines.information@wales.nhs.uk)

### Change history:

Version number	Change details	Date
1.0	Original PGD template developed	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2023

<sup>1</sup> this includes any relevant amendments to legislation (e.g. [2013 No.235](#), [2015 No.178](#) and [2015 No.323](#)).

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## 1. PGD development

This PGD has been developed and peer reviewed by an expert panel and approved by the Community Pharmacy Clinical Advisory Group (CPCAG) in accordance with the PGD Policy.

**This section MUST REMAIN when a PGD is adopted by an organisation**

### Expert panel

Name	Position	Designation
Dianne Burnett	Main author	National Lead Pharmacist Welsh Medicines Advice Service, Cardiff and Vale UHB
Adam Mackridge	CPCAG reviewer	Chair of Community Pharmacy Clinical Advisory Group (CPCAG) and Strategic Lead Pharmacist for Community Pharmacy, Betsi Cadwaladr UHB
Amy David	CPCAG reviewer	Primary Care Pharmacist, Swansea Bay UHB
Sally Kidsley	Medical Reviewer	Locum Consultant in Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare, Hywel Dda UHB

Date CPCAG approval of PGD: 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023

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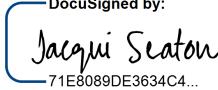


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## 2. Organisational authorisations

The PGD is not legally valid until it has had the authorisation of the Local Health Board in which the community pharmacy using it operates.

It is the responsibility of the Local Health Board, to ensure that all legal and governance requirements are met. The Local Health Board accepts governance responsibility for the appropriate use of the PGD.

**Powys Teaching Health Board** authorises this PGD for use by community pharmacies within its area that have been commissioned to provide the Common Ailments Service component of the Clinical Community Pharmacy Service. This authorisation is limited to those pharmacists that meet the requirements set out within the PGD.

Local Health Board approval (legal requirement) as per health board policy			
Role	Name	Sign	Date
Lead Doctor for PTHB	Dr Kate Wright	 DocuSigned by: Kate Wright 1F267952823F473...	9/4/2023
Chief Pharmacist for PTHB	Jacqui Seaton	 DocuSigned by: Jacqui Seaton 71E8089DE3634C4...	8/23/2023
Clinical Governance Lead for PTHB	Amanda Edwards	 DocuSigned by: Amanda Edwards 74A4E51A42E9473...	9/6/2023
Senior Pharmacist Lead for Community Pharmacies, PTHB	Emlyn Pritchard	 DocuSigned by: Emlyn Pritchard EB776BA7283F49B...	8/24/2023

Local enquiries regarding the use of this PGD may be directed to [welshmedicines.information@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:welshmedicines.information@wales.nhs.uk)

[Appendix B](#) provides a practitioner listing sheet. Individual practitioners must be listed by name to work to this PGD. Alternative practitioner listing sheets may be used where appropriate in accordance with local policy, but this should be an individual agreement or a multiple practitioner listing sheet as included at the end of this PGD.

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### 3. Characteristics of Staff

<b>Qualifications and professional registration</b>	This PGD is for use by pharmacists currently registered with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC).
<b>Additional requirements</b>	<p>Pharmacists must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ be employed by, or providing services on behalf of a pharmacy listed in the All Wales Pharmacy Database (AWPD) for the Clinical Community Pharmacy Service.</li> <li>➤ be authorised by name as an approved practitioner under the current terms of this Patient Group Direction before working to it by completing <a href="#">Appendix B</a>.</li> <li>➤ be familiar with the medicine and alert to changes in the <a href="#">Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC)</a>.</li> <li>➤ have access to the Patient Group Direction and associated resources (including the service specification and the Common Ailments Formulary monograph supporting the PGD) and must be competent in the use of PGDs (see <a href="#">NICE Competency framework for health professionals using PGDs</a>).</li> <li>➤ be named in the All Wales Pharmacy Database for the Common Ailment component of the Clinical Community Pharmacy Service.</li> <li>➤ have met the training requirements for the service as set out by HEIW (Health Education and Improvement Wales).</li> <li>➤ be familiar with the <a href="#">British National Formulary (BNF)</a> and <a href="#">SmPC</a> entries for clotrimazole.</li> <li>➤ have awareness of the adverse drug reactions associated with clotrimazole.</li> </ul> <p><b>The pharmacist must be listed by name, under the current version of this PGD that has been issued by the local health board in which area they are operating before working under its authority.</b></p>
<b>Ongoing training and competency</b>	<p>Pharmacists must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ undertake regular CPD and maintain own level of competence and knowledge in this clinical area to provide the service.</li> <li>➤ be aware of any updates made to the products in the <a href="#">SmPC</a> and <a href="#">BNF</a>.</li> <li>➤ be aware of any updates to relevant national and local guidelines.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ as registered professionals, be professionally accountable and must work within their competence.</li> </ul> <p>A record of any training and competency assessments undertaken must be maintained.</p>
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#### 4. Clinical condition

<b>Clinical condition or situation to which this PGD applies</b>	For the treatment of vulvovaginal candidiasis in accordance with the community pharmacy Common Ailment Service (CAS) component of the Clinical Community Pharmacy Service (CCPS).
<b>Criteria for inclusion</b>	<p>Clotrimazole 500 mg vaginal pessary can be given to:</p> <p>Individuals aged 16 to 60 years old, presenting with symptoms of vulvovaginal candidiasis which include white odourless discharge, vaginal soreness and vulval itching AND oral 1<sup>st</sup> line treatment is not suitable AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ they have no contraindications to clotrimazole – see <a href="#">SmPC</a></li> <li>➤ where informed consent has been given (patient, parent/guardian, carer)</li> </ul>
<b>Criteria for exclusion<sup>2</sup></b>	<p>Clotrimazole 500 mg vaginal pessary should not be supplied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ to individuals with severe, extensive or persistent symptoms</li> <li>➤ if the individual has had more than two infections of vulvovaginal candidiasis in the last 6 months</li> <li>➤ individuals who present seven days or longer after being treated with unresolved symptoms</li> <li>➤ if the individual is less than 16 years old or 61 years and over</li> <li>➤ to individuals with known hypersensitivity to imidazoles or other vaginal antifungal products</li> <li>➤ to individuals with a known or suspected pregnancy; pregnancy requires a longer duration of treatment, usually about 7 days with vaginal use, to clear the infection</li> <li>➤ to individuals who are immunocompromised</li> <li>➤ individuals taking tacrolimus or sirolimus</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Exclusion under this PGD does not necessarily mean the medication is contraindicated, but it would be outside its remit and another form of authorisation for supply will be required

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(continued over page)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ to an individual with diabetes, if in the opinion of the pharmacist -           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ there are concerns regarding diabetic control of the individual</li> <li>○ the individual is at increased risk of detrimental symptoms associated with poorly controlled diabetes; symptoms can include thirst, blurred vision, fatigue, increased frequency of urination</li> <li>○ the individual is unsure how to manage their diabetes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Criteria for exclusion</b> (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ to individuals with signs of an untreated bacterial, viral or fungal infection of the skin (if infected lesions are present)</li> <li>➤ if the individual appears systemically unwell e.g. presents with fever or chills</li> <li>➤ if a foul-smelling vaginal discharge is present</li> <li>➤ in the presence of increased urinary frequency</li> <li>➤ in the presence of abnormal/irregular vaginal bleeding/blood-stained discharge</li> <li>➤ in the presence of vulval or vaginal ulcers, blisters or sores</li> <li>➤ in the presence of abdominal pain or dysuria</li> <li>➤ if the individual is experiencing nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea</li> <li>➤ if the individual has a previous history of a sexual transmitted infection (STI) or exposure to a partner with an STI and the diagnosis of vulvovaginal candidiasis is uncertain</li> <li>➤ to individuals unwilling to use a pessary/applicator</li> <li>➤ if the pharmacist is unable to undertake an appropriate assessment, in order to determine the need for the medicine and that it would be appropriate for the patient to use it</li> <li>➤ to individuals who are unable to administer or use the product effectively themselves or who do not have a parent/guardian/ carer to administer or apply the medication for them</li> <li>➤ if an individual does not agree to share relevant clinical information</li> <li>➤ to individuals with known hypersensitivity to clotrimazole or any of the excipients – see <a href="#">SmPC</a></li> </ul>

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<p><b>Cautions (including relevant actions to be taken)</b></p> <p>(continued over page)</p>	<p>Please refer to the <a href="#">SmPC</a> for clotrimazole 500 mg vaginal pessary for full details of special warnings and precautions for use.</p> <p><b>Diabetes</b></p> <p>Individuals with diabetes can be supplied with treatment if, in the opinion of the pharmacist, there are no concerns or symptoms suggestive of poor control. For example, thirst, blurred vision, fatigue etc.</p> <p><b>Breast feeding</b></p> <p>Although there is no direct evidence for the vaginal use of clotrimazole while breast feeding, their vaginal absorption is minimal, presenting no identifiable risk to the infant. No special</p>
<p><b>Cautions (including relevant actions to be taken)</b></p> <p>(continued)</p>	<p>precautions are required prior to breast feeding when clotrimazole is used vaginally.</p> <p><b>Latex contraceptives</b></p> <p>Laboratory tests have suggested that, when used together, this product may cause damage to latex contraceptives such as condoms or diaphragms. Consequently, the effectiveness of such contraceptives may be reduced. Individuals should be advised to use alternative precautions during use and for at least five days after using this product.</p> <p><b>Menstruation</b></p> <p>For individuals who require treatment during menstruation, generally, treatment should be delayed due to the risk of the pessary being washed out by the menstrual flow. Consider an oral treatment as an alternative if suitable. If the individual is unwilling to wait until menstruation is finished and oral treatment is unsuitable then refer to GP.</p> <p><b>Pain on intercourse</b></p> <p>Superficial pain on intercourse (dyspareunia) may be a symptom of vulvovaginal candidiasis. If following a discussion with the patient, the pharmacist feels that the pain is not related to vulvovaginal candidiasis, refer to GP. If the pharmacist is comfortable that symptoms are related to vulvovaginal candidiasis and treatment is supplied, advise the individual to promptly see their GP if any pain on intercourse has not resolved after treatment.</p>

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	<p><b>Caution should be exercised if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ an individual has a previous history of an STI or exposure to a partner with an STI and the diagnosis of vulvovaginal candidiasis is certain and treatment is supplied - advise the individual to promptly see their GP or sexual health clinic if symptoms do not resolve.</li> <li>➤ an individual is trying to conceive - the possibility of pregnancy should be ruled out before supplying.</li> </ul> <p>See also <a href="#">drug interactions</a> section below for additional cautions.</p>
<p><b>Action to be taken if the individual is excluded or declines treatment</b> (continued over page)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Explain the reasons for exclusion to the individual and document in the consultation record.</li> <li>➤ If the individual declines, record the reason and advise of the consequences of not receiving treatment. Document the advice</li> </ul>
<p><b>Action to be taken if the individual is excluded or declines treatment</b> (continued)</p>	<p>given alongside details of any referral made and their (patient, parent, guardian) intended actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If appropriate, patients may be offered a suitable alternative to clotrimazole 500 mg pessary from the All Wales Common Ailments Service Formulary. Alternatively, refer the individual to their GP if appropriate and/or provide them with information about further options including sexual health services.</li> <li>➤ Where there are safeguarding concerns, seek advice from local safeguarding services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Further advice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Further information can be found in the <a href="#">SmPC</a>, <a href="#">BNF</a> and the <a href="#">All Wales Common Ailments Service Formulary</a>.</li> </ul>

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## 5. Description of treatment

<b>Name, strength &amp; formulation of drug</b>	Clotrimazole 500 mg pessary
<b>Legal category</b>	Prescription Only Medicine (POM)
<b>Black triangle ▼</b>	No
<b>Off-label use</b>	No
<b>Route / method of administration</b>	The pessary should be inserted into the vagina, as high as possible, using the applicator provided.
<b>Dose and frequency of administration</b>	One single dose clotrimazole 500 mg pessary should be inserted at night when going to bed.
<b>Duration of treatment</b>	This PGD only allows for the duration stated in the <a href="#">dosage schedule</a> above.
<b>Quantity to be supplied/administered</b>	Appropriately labelled pack to provide ONE treatment course. 1 x 500 mg clotrimazole pessary pack to provide ONE course of treatment at a dose of ONE application.
<b>Drug interactions</b>	<p>A detailed list of drug interactions can be found in the <a href="#">SmPC</a> and the <a href="#">BNF</a>.</p> <p><b>Contraindications:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ tacrolimus and sirolimus – concurrent use with vaginal clotrimazole; may lead to increase plasma levels of tacrolimus/sirolimus.</li> <li>➤ individual is on other drugs used in the treatment of fungal diseases e.g. amphotericin and nystatin; clotrimazole may reduce their effectiveness.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cautions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ lomitapide – clotrimazole is predicted to increase the exposure to lomitapide; manufacturer advises separate administration by 12 hours.</li> <li>➤ sodium zirconium cyclosilicate – decreases exposure to clotrimazole; manufacturer advises separate administration by at least 2 hours.</li> </ul>

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	<p><b>Unlikely to be significant:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ colecalciferol – clotrimazole is predicted to decrease the exposure to colecalciferol.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Identification &amp; management of adverse reactions</b></p>	<p>If the patient experiences any of the following they must tell their doctor straight away or go to their nearest Accident and Emergency Department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ difficulty breathing or swallowing</li> <li>➤ swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue or throat (severe allergic reaction symptoms)</li> <li>➤ severe itching of the skin, with a rash or raised lumps, hives or blisters.</li> <li>➤ dizziness which may include fainting, low blood pressure</li> <li>➤ intolerable burning sensation or irritation</li> </ul> <p>The following side effects have been reported as:</p> <p><u>Not known</u> (cannot be estimated from the available data)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Mild burning or irritation immediately after inserting the pessary</li> <li>➤ Severe itching, irritation or swelling</li> <li>➤ Rashes</li> <li>➤ Discomfort, burning sensation, irritation or pelvic pain</li> <li>➤ Vaginal peeling or bleeding</li> <li>➤ Stomach pain</li> </ul> <p>N.B. detailed lists of adverse reactions are available in the <a href="#">SmPC</a>, and the <a href="#">BNF</a>. Prior to issuing medication, please refer to these resources to check that there has been no change to the potential adverse reactions listed above.</p>
<p><b>Patient or carer advice/follow up</b></p>	<p>Supply the marketing authorisation holder's patient information leaflet (PIL).</p> <p>Inform the individual or their carer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ if they get any side effects, to talk to their doctor, or pharmacist or</li> </ul>

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	<p>nurse and report any suspected adverse reactions to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) by using the <a href="#">Yellow Card</a> reporting scheme; this includes any possible side effects not listed in the <a href="#">PIL</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ to seek medical advice if their condition deteriorates and/or they become systemically unwell</li> <li>➤ to read the <a href="#">PIL</a> before using the medication</li> </ul>
<p><b>Patient or carer advice/follow up</b> (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ to visit the <a href="#">NHS website</a> on clotrimazole for more information</li> <li>➤ if they use latex contraceptives such as condoms or diaphragms that they must use alternative precautions during use and for at least five days after using this product as it may damage them and reduce their effectiveness</li> <li>➤ vaginal intercourse should be avoided in case of vaginal infection and while using this product because their partner could become infected; sexual partners do not need to be treated unless they develop symptoms</li> <li>➤ the pessaries need moisture in the vagina to dissolve and if they experience vaginal dryness they may notice pieces of undissolved pessary; to prevent this, the pessary should be inserted as high as possible into the vagina just before going to bed</li> <li>➤ use water and an emollient, instead of soap, to clean or moisturise the vulval area, and dry properly</li> <li>➤ avoid potential irritants in toiletries (including soaps or shower gels), antiseptics, wipes, and 'feminine hygiene' products</li> <li>➤ avoid vaginal douching</li> <li>➤ avoid washing underwear in biological washing powder and avoid fabric conditioners</li> <li>➤ wear cotton underwear</li> <li>➤ avoid tight fitting clothing and non-absorbent clothing</li> <li>➤ see GP if symptoms not resolved within 7 days</li> <li>➤ if using a pessary or intravaginal cream, avoid treatment during the menstrual period due to the risk of the pessary or cream being washed out by the menstrual flow; the treatment should be finished before the onset of menstruation</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ do not use tampons, intravaginal douches, spermicides or other vaginal products while using the pessary or intra-vaginal cream</li> <li>➤ avoid use of complementary therapies such as application of yoghurt, topical or oral probiotics, and tea tree or other essential oils</li> <li>➤ refer individual to local health boards sexual health services website where appropriate</li> <li>➤ offer advice on safe sex practices if appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Records</b>	<p>The consultation details including any medication supplied under the PGD must be recorded in Choose Pharmacy at the time of the consultation. Where the Choose Pharmacy platform is not available, temporary records must be made using the paper-based consultation record. Paper based records must be transferred onto the Choose Pharmacy as soon as practically possible following the consultation.</p> <p>If the patient is excluded, and any specific advice that has been given, a record of the reason for exclusion must be documented within the consultation notes.</p>

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Key references

- British National Formulary (BNF) – current edition. Available from: <https://bnf.nice.org.uk/> [accessed 18 January 2023]
- Summary Product Characteristics (SmPC). Available from: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc> [accessed 18 January 2023]
- Patient Group Directions. Medicines practice guideline [MPG2]. Updated March 2017. Available from: <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/mpg2/resources> [accessed 18 January 2023]
- General Pharmaceutical Council. In Practice: Guidance on Consent. Revised June 2018. Available from: <https://www.pharmacyregulation.org> [accessed 18 January 2023]
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- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: Clinical Knowledge Summaries. Candida – female genital. Last revised July 2022. Available from: <https://cks.nice.org.uk> [accessed 18 January 2023]
- Specialist Pharmacy Service. SPS PGD template for the supply of clotrimazole pessaries for the treatment of vulvo-vaginal candidiasis. October 2020. Available from: <https://www.sps.nhs.uk> [accessed 18 January 2023]
- Specialist Pharmacy Service. Safety in Lactation: Vaginal and vulval infections. Published 23 September 2020. Available from: <https://www.sps.nhs.uk> [accessed 18 January 2023]
- British Association for Sexual Health and HIV. British Association for Sexual Health and HIV national guideline for the management of vulvovaginal candidiasis 2019. Published June 2020. Available from: <https://www.bashhguidelines.org/current-guidelines/vaginal-discharge/vulvovaginal-candidiasis-2019/> [accessed 18 January 2023]
- Yellow Card Reporting. Available from: <http://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk> [accessed 18 January 2023]
- NHS 111 Wales Health A-Z. Available from: <https://111.wales.nhs.uk> [accessed 18 January 2023]
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## Appendix B: *Healthcare Professionals Agreement to Practice*

Authorisation for the use of the Patient Group Direction for the supply of:  
Clotrimazole 500 mg pessary by community pharmacists under the Clinical Community Pharmacy  
Common Ailment Service (vulvo-vaginal candidiasis) commissioned by  
**[Powys Teaching Health Board]**

### Patient Group Directions do not remove inherent professional obligations or accountability.

Once completed and approved, health professionals wishing to use the PGD must sign up to the PGD for the local health board in which they will be providing services. Only pharmacists who are accredited in line with the National Service Specification can operate under the PGD.

This Patient Group Direction is to be read, agreed and signed by all registered healthcare professionals authorised to operate the PGD. By signing this document, the professional operating the PGD confirms that they have read and understood the content of this PGD and are willing and competent to work under it within their professional code of conduct. One copy should be given to each named pharmacist and a signed copy must be kept within the pharmacy by the nominated member of staff with responsibility for PGDs. This will usually be the Superintendent Pharmacist or Responsible Pharmacist.

**Name and address of pharmacy:**

#### For registered professional

*I confirm that I have read and understood the content of this PGD and that I am willing and competent to work under it within my professional code of conduct.*

Name of registered pharmacist	Signature	GPhC number	Date

*PGD for the supply of clotrimazole 500 mg vaginal pessary for vulvo-vaginal candidiasis  
as part of the Community Pharmacy Common Ailment Service  
Valid from: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 Expiry Date: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026*

PGD 0217  
Valid From 01/07/2023  
Review date 31/03/2026  
Expiry Date 30/06/2026