

Is it up to date?

Yes. Its contents are regularly reviewed to ensure that it is up to date.

What about new medicines?

New medicines may be included if they represent an advance over current medicines.

What if I am allergic to a medicine recommended in the NI Formulary or if I have had a medicine before and it doesn't suit me?

The NI Formulary will include most of the medicines your doctor might need to prescribe in most situations. Not all medicines suit all patients and there will be times when doctors will need to use medicines that are not in the NI Formulary.

Is this happening only in Northern Ireland?

No. Other regions in the UK use formularies as well as many other countries throughout the world.

Who will use it?

The NI Formulary will be used by all healthcare staff who prescribe drugs for patients. This includes:

- Family doctors
- Hospital doctors
- Some nurses, pharmacists and other healthcare staff who are able to write prescriptions.

Does it benefit the NHS?

Yes. It helps make the best use of NHS resources and improves safety and quality of care for everyone in Northern Ireland.

Can I find out more about the Northern Ireland Formulary?

Yes

You can view the latest version on the internet. Visit at

<http://Niformulary.hscni.net>

The Northern Ireland Formulary



The right medicine for you
an information leaflet for patients

The right medicine for you

More medicines are developed each year to prevent and treat illness. Medicines have improved significantly in recent times and will continue to do so.

So can you be sure you are getting the right medicine for you?

In Northern Ireland, groups of doctors and pharmacists have developed a formulary known as the Northern Ireland Formulary.

The NI Formulary offers guidance to your GP and hospital doctor to help them select the most appropriate medicine for your condition. It aims to promote safe, effective and economical prescribing.

The medicines included are the most tried and trusted available and will provide the best treatment for the majority of patients.

The NI Formulary will not cover all drugs or conditions.

What is a formulary?

A formulary is a preferred list of medicines which your doctor would choose to prescribe for you if appropriate. The medicines are chosen on the basis of:

- How well the medicine works to treat the condition
- How safe is the drug (does it cause harmful effects)
- Whether it is good value

What does the NI Formulary mean to me?

The NI Formulary helps to make sure that you receive high quality medicines that are safe and work well. A medicine's effectiveness is the most important reason for including it in the NI Formulary. All medicines in the NI Formulary have a proven track record in clinical drug trials and have shown their worth in everyday practice.

By using a limited list of medicines it is easier for community pharmacies to stock supplies of your medicines.

As doctors become more familiar with a limited range of medicines, this helps to reduce prescribing errors and improve safety for patients.

The NI Formulary will promote consistent prescribing across Northern Ireland. You will benefit by getting the same medicines from your GP as you will in local hospitals.

Will my medicines be changed?

If you go to see your doctor with a condition that is covered by one of the NI Formulary chapters, it is likely that you will be prescribed one of these medicines – normally the first line choice, unless there is a reason why the preferred medicine would not be suitable for you.

If you are currently taking a medicine that is not on the NI Formulary, your medicine will still be available to you on prescription.

You may be asked to change over to the Formulary medicine choice if your doctor feels that it is appropriate for you to do so.