**Albrighton Medical Practice**

**The cost of prescribing medication to patients**

Last year 1.1 billion prescription items were dispensed in primary care at a cost of £9.2billion. This growing cost coupled with finite resources means it is important that the NHS achieves the greatest value from the money that it spends.

Some patients are receiving medicines which have been proven to be relatively ineffective or in some cases potentially harmful, and/or for which there are other more effective, safer and/or cheaper alternatives; there are also products which are no longer appropriate to be prescribed on the NHS.

NHS England has partnered with Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) to try to ensure they can use their prescribing resources effectively. This is a nationally co-ordinated approach.

Shropshire CCG has issued guidance to the Albrighton Medical Practice in respect of prescribing certain items. These items fall into 3 categories:

*1. Products of low clinical effectiveness, where there is a lack of robust evidence of clinical effectiveness or there are significant safety concerns;*

*2. Products which are clinically effective but where more cost-effective products are available, including products that have been subject to excessive price inflation; or*

*3. Products which are clinically effective but, due to the nature of the product, are deemed a low priority for NHS funding.*

**What does this mean for our patients:**

* Your GP may ask you to purchase certain medications instead of receiving them via prescriptions, as we have been instructed to stop providing them on the NHS
* Your GP may ask you to stop taking certain medications, as they are deemed to have little or no effect
* Your GP may change your medication to a different product, which may be safer or more cost effective to prescribe

**Self-Care**

Many common conditions can be treated at home with the support of your local pharmacy if needed. Over the counter products for self-care include pain relief and cough and cold remedies. These items can be bought from pharmacies, supermarkets, and discount stores without a prescription. You can get them without an appointment or seeing a doctor.