

Molly Courtenay helps resolve everyday issues for nurse prescribers



Q Some of the vaccines that we administer in our practice, such as yellow fever and meningitis, are licensed for use

in this country. However, others, including Japanese encephalitis and tick-born encephalitis, are not licensed in the UK. Can a patient group direction (PGD) be used to administer private vaccines? As yellow fever and meningitis are licensed, can a patient specific direction (PSD) be

authorised by a nurse prescriber for private patients?

A You can only use PGDs in the NHS. This includes those services funded by the NHS but provided by the private, voluntary or charitable sectors. Therefore, in answer to your first question as to whether a PGD can be used to administer a private vaccine, the answer is no.

You mention that some of the vaccines that you administer, such as Japanese encephalitis and tick-born encephalitis, are unlicensed. A PGD can only be used to admin-

ister licensed medicines. I am not sure whether you see both NHS and/or private patients. However, you would be unable to administer these medicines under a PGD even if the patients were NHS patients.

Your second question asks whether a nurse prescriber can authorise a PSD for a licensed medicine for a private patients. A nurse is able to write a prescription for a private licensed medicine. Therefore, they should also be able to write a PSD for a private licensed medicine.

You would need to be sure that

the person whom you were authorising to administer the medicine was competent to do so. However, a nurse prescriber is unable to authorise a PSD for an unlicensed medicine. In this situation a PSD would be required from a doctor.

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