

Asthma

The pathway for a patient with asthma includes the need to both step-up and step-down medicine use within the pathway. The All-Wales Asthma Management and Prescribing Guideline (see diagram) exemplifies the dominant role of branded generic medicines in the care of people living with the condition²⁹.

Inhaled asthma therapies include a device to ensure the drug reaches the targeted part of the respiratory system. MHRA requires that such medicine/device combinations carry a brand name because the various presentations are not interchangeable.

Similarly, the current joint British Thoracic Society – Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network – NICE guidance³⁰ supports the necessity to prescribe branded generic asthma medicines on clinical grounds:

“Generic prescribing of inhalers should be avoided as this might lead to people with asthma being given an unfamiliar inhaler device which they are not able to use properly.”

