



Republic of Ghana

Ministry of Health
Ghana National Drugs Programme
(GNDP)

Standard Treatment Guidelines

Ministry of Health
Seventh Edition (7th), 2017

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PREFACE

Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs) are systematically developed statements that assist healthcare providers in deciding on appropriate treatments for specific clinical problems. They usually reflect the consensus on the optimal treatment options within a health system and aim at beneficially influencing prescribing behaviour at all levels of care.

Health systems, particularly in developing countries, are faced with growing health needs on one hand and limited resources on the other. Policy makers at various levels are therefore engaged in designing cost-effective health interventions that ensure accessible and affordable quality care for all, in particular the poor and vulnerable groups.

Inappropriate prescribing is one of the manifestations of irrational medication use behaviour. It occurs when medicines are not prescribed in accordance with guidelines that are based on scientific evidence to ensure safe, effective, and economic use. STGs provide the tool for health care providers to give quality standardised care at affordable cost.

For Ghana's growing National Health Insurance Scheme, a standard treatment guideline is seen as a cost containment tool to ensure that inefficiencies, fraud and poly-pharmacy, often associated with Health Insurance Schemes, are minimised.

Regular, objective and transparent reviews of STGs are very important because the development process is a continual effort and not limited to a one-time production. This process includes gaining acceptance of the concept and preparing the text for wide consultation and consensus building. This is to ensure that users identify with and collectively own the process of development.

This document is the seventh edition of the Ministry of Health's officially approved prescribers' and dispensers' guide for all levels of healthcare. Great effort has been put into aligning the prevailing health insurance benefits package to this edition. The official release of this edition would be the e-copy, available at <http://www.ghndp.org>. This edition is also available on compact disk.

The Ministry of Health is particularly grateful to its development partners, experts, and other stakeholders for their continuous support to the health sector.

I am confident that all users of this document would find this edition very useful.

Hon. Kwaku Agyeman-Manu
Minister for Health
June 2017

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| Reproductive Health Unit, GHS |

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INTRODUCTION

The Government of Ghana, through the National Medicine Policy, remains committed to ensuring the availability of and accessibility to, affordable and good quality medicines for all Ghanaians; and it is expected that these medicines would be used rationally. Achieving these objectives require a comprehensive strategy that not only includes supply and distribution, but also appropriate and thoughtful prescribing, dispensing and use of medicines.

The Ministry of Health since 1983 has been publishing a list of Essential Drugs with Therapeutic Guidelines to aid the rational use of drugs. This document has been reviewed in response to new knowledge on drugs and diseases and changes in the epidemiology of diseases in Ghana. The Ministry has also produced guidelines for specific disease control programmes, diseases and identifiable health providers.

The Standard Treatment Guidelines have been prepared as a tool to assist and guide prescribers (including doctors, medical assistants, and midwives), pharmacists, dispensers, and other healthcare staff who prescribe at primary care facilities in providing quality care to patients. The guidelines list the preferred treatments for common health problems experienced by people in the health system and were subjected to stakeholder discussions before being finalised to ensure that the opinion of the intended users were considered and incorporated.

The guidelines are designed to be used as a guide to treatment choices and as a reference book to help in the overall management of patients, such as when to refer. The guidelines are meant for use at all levels within the health system, both public and private.

It is recognised that the treatment guidance detailed in this book may differ from current practice. It is emphasised that the choices described here have the weight of scientific evidence to support them, together with the collective opinion of a wide group of recognised national and international experts. The recommendations have been rated on the following basis:

Evidence Rating A – requires at least one randomised control trial as part of a body of scientific literature of overall good quality and consistency addressing the specific recommendation.

Evidence Rating B – requires the availability of well-conducted clinical studies but no randomised clinical trials on the topic of recommendation.

Evidence Rating C – requires evidence obtained from expert committee reports or opinions and/or clinical experience of respected authorities. This indicates an absence of directly applicable clinical studies of good quality.

To use treatment other than those recommended here may have to be justified to colleagues, managers, or in law.

The content of these treatment guidelines will undergo a process of continuous review. Comments or suggestions for improvement are welcome. Those comments or suggestions for addition of diseases should include evidence of prevalence as well as a draft treatment guideline using the format set out in this book. In the case of a request for a new drug or replacing a listed product with another product, the evidence base must be clearly defined and included with the request.

These suggestions should be sent to:

The Programme Manager
Ghana National Drugs Programme
Ministry of Health
PO Box MB 582
Accra, Ghana
West Africa
Website: www.ghndp.org

How to use this book

To use these guidelines effectively, it is important that you become familiar with the contents. Take time to read the book and understand the content and layout.

The contents of this book have been arranged in approximately alphabetical order of 'body systems'. Within each section, a number of disease states, which are significant in Ghana have been identified. For each of these disease states the structuring of the information and guidance has been standardised to include a brief description of the condition or disease and the more common signs and symptoms. In each case the objectives of treatment have been set out, followed by recommended non-pharmacological as well as the pharmacological treatment choices.

The choice of treatment guidance used here is based on the principles of 'evidence based medicine'. That is, it is based on the international medical and pharmaceutical literature, which clearly demonstrates the efficacy of the treatment choices.

The treatment guidelines try to take the user through a sequence of diagnosis, treatment, treatment objectives, and choice of treatment