

Hartwood Healthcare

Benzodiazepine Prescribing Policy

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Responsible Person/Partner:	Senior Partner

Benzodiazepine Prescribing Policy

This policy outlines the current prescribing approach for benzodiazepines at Hartwood Healthcare. These medications include diazepam, lorazepam, temazepam, zopiclone, and zolpidem.

Benzodiazepines carry significant risks when used long-term, including potential health complications and dependency. In line with national guidelines, we have reviewed and updated our prescribing and monitoring practices for these medications.

Key Points of Our Policy:

- **No Repeat Prescriptions:** Benzodiazepines will not be issued on a repeat prescription basis.
- **Standardized Dosage:** All diazepam prescriptions will be issued in 2mg tablet strength only.
- **Regular Reviews:** If you are currently prescribed any of these medications, your prescription will be reviewed regularly by a GP, either in person or by telephone. The frequency of these reviews will be determined during your consultation.
- **Medication Reduction:** Regular attempts to reduce benzodiazepine dosage are standard practice across the BNSSG area and will be part of your care plan.
- **Urine Testing:** As part of safe prescribing, urine drug screenings may be required periodically.
- **New Registrations:** Patients joining the practice who are already using these medications will be required to book a face-to-face appointment with a GP to discuss potential reduction plans and set up a review schedule.
- **Prescription Frequency:** In some cases, prescriptions may be issued weekly or fortnightly, at the discretion of the reviewing GP.
- **Storage Responsibility:** Patients are responsible for safe storage. Lost, stolen, or damaged meds will not be replaced.
- **No Early Issuing:** Early prescriptions will not be provided.
- **Support Services:** If there are ongoing safety concerns, patients may be referred to Horizons Bristol Community Addiction Services for further support and management.
- **Travel/Leisure:** We do not prescribe benzodiazepines for travel-related purposes, nor do we provide letters for carrying medications while traveling.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we aim to ensure the safest possible care for all our patients.