Protocol for the Administration or supply of prescription only medicines (POMs) under a PGD/PSD

Purpose
Non prescribing health care professionals must have appropriate mechanisms in place to administer medicine on the instruction of a GP. The Medicines Act 1968 does not permit nurses who are not qualified prescribers to administer or supply prescription only medicine (POMs) unless one of the following is in place:

- signed prescription
- signed Patient Specific Direction (PSD)
- signed Patient Group Direction (PGD)

Patient Group Directions (PGDs)
A Patient Group Direction is a written and signed instruction for the supply and administration of a named licensed medicine for a defined clinical condition. PGDs allow a range of specified registration health care professionals to supply and/or administer a medicine directly to a patient with an identified clinical condition without them necessarily seeing a prescriber. The health care professional working within the PGD is responsible for assessing that the patient fits the criteria set out in the PGD.

PGDs are intended to improve patient care by enabling registered health professionals other than doctors to supply and/or administer medicines to patients. Examples of where PGDs may be appropriate are services where assessment and treatment follows a clearly predictable pattern, eg immunisation, family planning.

The Medicines Act does not allow HCAs to administer POMs under a PGD as they are not included in the list of ‘authorised’ persons. An authorised person is one who is professionally regulated. As such, HCAs have to use a PSD or signed prescription as authority.

Patient Specific Directions (PSDs)
A Patient Specific Direction is a written or electronic, signed instruction from the GP to the nurse/health care assistant relating to a specific individual patient. The prescriber, who will write the PSD, has a duty of care and is professionally and legally accountable for the care he/she provides, including tasks delegated to others. The prescriber must be satisfied that the person to whom a task is delegated has the qualifications, experience, knowledge and skills to provide the care or treatment involved.
A person who supplies or administers a medicine is accountable for their own practice and must be trained and competent to undertake such tasks. They must act according to their level of competence and in accordance with the directions of the prescriber.

**Clinical Governance**
In law, anyone who the prescriber has assessed as competent, has the necessary knowledge and skills, and has been delegated the task may follow a PSD. Beeches Green Surgery has a duty of care to both patients and staff and is responsible for ensuring that the staff employed are properly trained to undertake tasks specified within agreed job descriptions.

Prescribers and anyone administering or supplying medicines must ensure that they adhere to the clinical governance policies and procedures and associated arrangements,

**PSDs - what they cannot be**
- a renamed PGD template used to instruct staff
- a generic instruction to be applied to any patient who may be seen by a healthcare professional or who has an appointment on any particular date, for example, an instruction to administer a ‘flu vaccine; to any patient who fits the criteria attending clinics on a specific day
- a verbal instruction

**PSDs - what they should be; what needs to be included**
- written - a verbal PSD is not valid
- written by a prescriber who makes a decision based on the knowledge of an individual patient assessment, and the written instruction for the supply and/or administration of the medicine is individually tailored to the needs of that patient
- name, date of birth and address of patient
- name, form and strength of medicine
- route of administration
- dose
- frequency
- start and finish dates
- signature of prescriber

As PSDs are individually tailored to the needs of a single patient, more information may be required to enable safe supply and/or administration of some medicines and to manage identified risks.