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20<sup>th</sup> May 2010

To: Medical Director & Chief Pharmacist ASPH  
Medical Director & Chief Pharmacist RSCH  
Medical Director & Chief Pharmacist FPH  
Medical Director & Chief Pharmacist SASH  
Medical Director & Chief Pharmacist ESHUT  
Medical Director & Chief Pharmacist Kingston Hospital  
All GPs within NHS Surrey

**Re: Prescribing of Low Molecular Weight Heparins (LMWH) pre-operatively**

Dear Colleague,

The pharmaceutical commissioning team in NHS Surrey recently completed a piece of work in producing an amber\* proforma to support GPs in the on-going prescribing of treatment dose LMWH in specific patient cohorts. Following on from this NHS Surrey received a number of queries from GPs in relation to the prescribing of LMWH pre-operatively in patients that are usually maintained on warfarin.

I have been in contact with the Department of Health regarding this and they have confirmed the following:

*'Where a drug is not excluded from Payment by Results then it is included within it unless it is part of an excluded service. This would include drugs that a patient is switched to in anticipation of surgery.'*

NHS Surrey would therefore expect if a patient requires to be switched to a LMWH prior to surgery that this would be prescribed by the Acute Trust concerned and that the GP should not be requested to prescribe.

Yours sincerely

Linda Honey  
Head of Pharmaceutical Commissioning