

# Acamprosate Prescribing Pathway for West Essex patients under the care of Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT)

1. Patient undergoing detox or abstinent from alcohol (i.e., no regular use and no alcohol use for the previous five days or more) and under the care of EPUT.
2. EPUT Essex STaRS (Structured Treatment and Recovery Service) prescriber (doctor/Non-Medical Prescriber [NMP]) conducts acamprosate prescribing assessment (including patient history and detox regimes):
  - a. Blood tests are required to be conducted before initiation by STaRS (which may include FBC, LFTs and U&Es). This part of the pathway sits with Essex ARC (Alcohol Recovery Community); prior to ARC referring to STaRS they liaise with GP Practices to arrange for blood tests to be done/results shared with STaRS.
  - b. There are monthly psychosocial interventions facilitated by Essex ARC. These would be relapse prevention interventions such as identifying triggers, coping with cravings, and rebuilding healthy coping mechanisms. The patient would need to be under one of the above prior to STaRS prescribing acamprosate.
  - c. Where clinically appropriate, STaRS prescriber initiates acamprosate and provides the patient with 1 month supply of acamprosate and the patient information leaflet (PIL).
3. After a week of acamprosate, STaRS prescriber reviews patient and if appropriate to continue, they request GP to continue to prescribe from month 2:
  - a. STaRS prescriber will also ask patient to refer to the West Essex acamprosate patient information leaflet (PIL) for information on the notice period required to obtain prescriptions from the GP; total duration of treatment to be supplied by GP and details of the review that will be carried out by the GP Practice every 2 to 3 months.
  - b. Acamprosate is to continue for a total 12-month period unless there is a need to stop earlier as below in point 5. The entire STaRS assessment is sent to the GP Practice via email. This includes the medical assessment, the request for the GP to continue prescribing acamprosate, the date from which the GP Practice needs to continue, instructions for review and to discontinue acamprosate after the 12-month period. AUDIT C can be used as part of the GP Practice reviews if desired (see Appendix 1). Essex STaRS offer specialist support to all GPs on request ([epunft.estarsharlow@nhs.net](mailto:epunft.estarsharlow@nhs.net)) with regards to prescribing advice around addiction as part of their contract.
  - c. No specific ongoing drug monitoring requirements relating to treatment with acamprosate are required and ongoing blood tests are not used routinely.
4. GP to take over prescribing from month 2 upon monthly patient requests (to be added to the

repeat prescribing for fixed number of repeats i.e., from month 2 to month 12 – a total of 11 months).

5. GP Practice staff to enquire whether the patient is engaging with their Essex ARC recovery worker and to check abstinence every 2 to 3 months (this could be GP, pharmacist, social prescriber). If concerned, for example if patient continues to drink daily, GP to discontinue acamprosate and advise patient to contact their Essex ARC worker. If GP Practice staff unsure how to proceed, they can contact Essex STaRS via [epunft.estarsharlow@nhs.net](mailto:epunft.estarsharlow@nhs.net), who would advise accordingly. AUDIT C can be used if desired (see Appendix 1).
6. The patient will be under the ongoing case management of Essex ARC (case managers for alcohol clients) throughout acamprosate treatment period. Open Road in Essex provide case management for complex patients.
7. At month 12, acamprosate is stopped by GP. If patient requests continuation, GP Practice staff to contact Essex STaRS via [epunft.estarsharlow@nhs.net](mailto:epunft.estarsharlow@nhs.net) for re-assessment.

Appendix 1: Alcohol use disorders identification test consumption (AUDIT C)

## Alcohol use disorders identification test consumption (AUDIT C)

This alcohol harm assessment tool consists of the consumption questions from the full alcohol use disorders identification test (AUDIT).

Questions	Scoring system					Your score
	0	1	2	3	4	
How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	Never	Monthly or less	2 to 4 times per month	2 to 3 times per week	4 or more times per week	
How many units of alcohol do you drink on a typical day when you are drinking?	0 to 2	3 to 4	5 to 6	7 to 9	10 or more	
How often have you had 6 or more units if female, or 8 or more if male, on a single occasion in the last year?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily	

[Alcohol use disorders identification test for consumption AUDIT C .pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

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