



## Healthy Start City and Hackney: Free Vitamins for Mothers and Children

### **Guidance note for pharmacies distributing Healthy Start vitamins**

Vitamin D is an essential vitamin to support healthy bones and growth. Most of our vitamin D comes from the summer sun and so it can be hard to get enough vitamin D in Britain, especially in winter.

To address concerns about vitamin D insufficiency/deficiency in the local population, the City and Hackney Public Health team fund the provision of **free** Healthy Start vitamins **universally**, to all pregnant women, mothers who have given birth within the last year and children under 4 years old. We call this scheme **Healthy Start City and Hackney**.

#### **Who should free Healthy Start vitamins be recommended to?**

- Women who are pregnant or have given birth within the last year
- Children from 4 weeks until their 4<sup>th</sup> Birthday\*

\*Please note, babies fed infant formula should not be given Healthy Start vitamins unless they are drinking less than 500mls (about 18fl oz or 1 pint) of formula a day because formula is fortified with vitamins and no other supplementation is required.

This scheme is only available to Hackney and the City residents and those registered with Hackney or City GPs.

#### **What's in the vitamins?**

Vitamin drops and tablets are supplied in bottles each containing enough for eight weeks. The daily dose for the women's vitamins tablets is one tablet a day. The daily dose for the children's vitamin drops is five drops a day.

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Women's tablets (daily dose)</b>	<b>Children's drops (daily dose)</b>
Folic Acid	400 micrograms	none
Vitamin A	none	233 micrograms
Vitamin C	70 milligrams	20 milligrams
Vitamin D3	10 micrograms	7.5 micrograms

Vitamins are approved by the Vegetarian Society, Kosher certified (Basel Kosher Commission), and Halal certified (Halal Food Council of Europe). The vitamins do not contain milk, egg, gluten, soya or peanut residues.

#### **How the scheme works**

The vitamins can be collected from all community pharmacies in Hackney, and two in the City (Boots on Aldgate High Street and Niemans chemist on Goswell Road). Participants will be asked to register on their first visit. Once registered, they can visit any participating pharmacy to collect more vitamins.

Registration forms for **Healthy Start City and Hackney** are available from a range of community services including midwives and health visitors and can be downloaded at <http://www.hackney.gov.uk/healthy-start>. However, these registration forms do not need to be signed by a health professional and participants can choose to go to their local pharmacy to register directly.



Distribution of Healthy Start vitamins from Children's Centres is being piloted from October 2016 at Linden Children's Centre, Woodberry Down Children's Centre and the One O'clock Club in Clissold Park.

### **How to register new users for the scheme**

Please ensure all information on the registration form has been completed, and then enter this information into the online system (Pharmoutcomes). This ensures that the distribution of vitamins can be monitored accurately. We are aware that this can be time-consuming and really appreciate your support.

Once registered, the name of returning users can be searched on the online system and vitamin distribution can be noted against the same patient record.

### **Eligibility for the National Scheme**

Based on age and income, some women and families are eligible for vouchers that can be used to buy fruit, vegetables and milk through the nationally-run Healthy Start scheme. When distributing the vitamins please check if the beneficiary is receiving these vouchers and if they are, ensure this is recorded as the council can claim reimbursement for the vitamins we supply to them.

Some beneficiaries might bring in national scheme vouchers – this is a proof of eligibility but you do not need to keep them when received.

### **Ordering more stock**

The vitamins are ordered centrally by the City and Hackney Public Health team, and the system is managed by Samina Tarafder ([samina.tarafder@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:samina.tarafder@hackney.gov.uk) / 0208 356 3282). On a quarterly basis you will be contacted to ask how much stock you require for the next 3 months. Please ensure a prompt response so that we can provide a single order to the NHS Supply Chain.

Both the drops and tablets last for 8 weeks, so users should return roughly two months after you last issued vitamins to them. Please check expiry dates on your new stock when it arrives, as this will vary but will be at least 3 months.

For more information about **Healthy Start City and Hackney** please contact:  
Jessica Veltman (Public Health Practitioner)  
[Jessica.veltman@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:Jessica.veltman@hackney.gov.uk) / 0208 356 4206