

## Prescribing Policy Statement; Managing requests for antibiotic treatment based on positive urinalysis dip stick results in Mid Essex

**Mid-Essex Clinical Commissioning Group does not support the prescribing of antibiotics based on a positive dipstick urinalysis result alone.**

This is especially true for patients over the age of 65 years because asymptomatic bacteraemia is common but is not associated with increased morbidity. Even if an older person has a positive dipstick test, the bacteriuria may not be responsible for the symptoms.

Relying on urine dipstick results means that many elderly people may be given antibiotics unnecessarily

If a care home rings the GP surgery to say that a urine dipstick is positive, GP/ prescriber should explain that urine dipstick tests should not be used in this age group as they are not accurate, and produce many false positive results

For patients who are asymptomatic, it is recommended that clinicians advise against an antibiotic

A UTI is less likely when patients present with confusion alone without an abnormal temperature, or with vaginal discharge or atrophy.

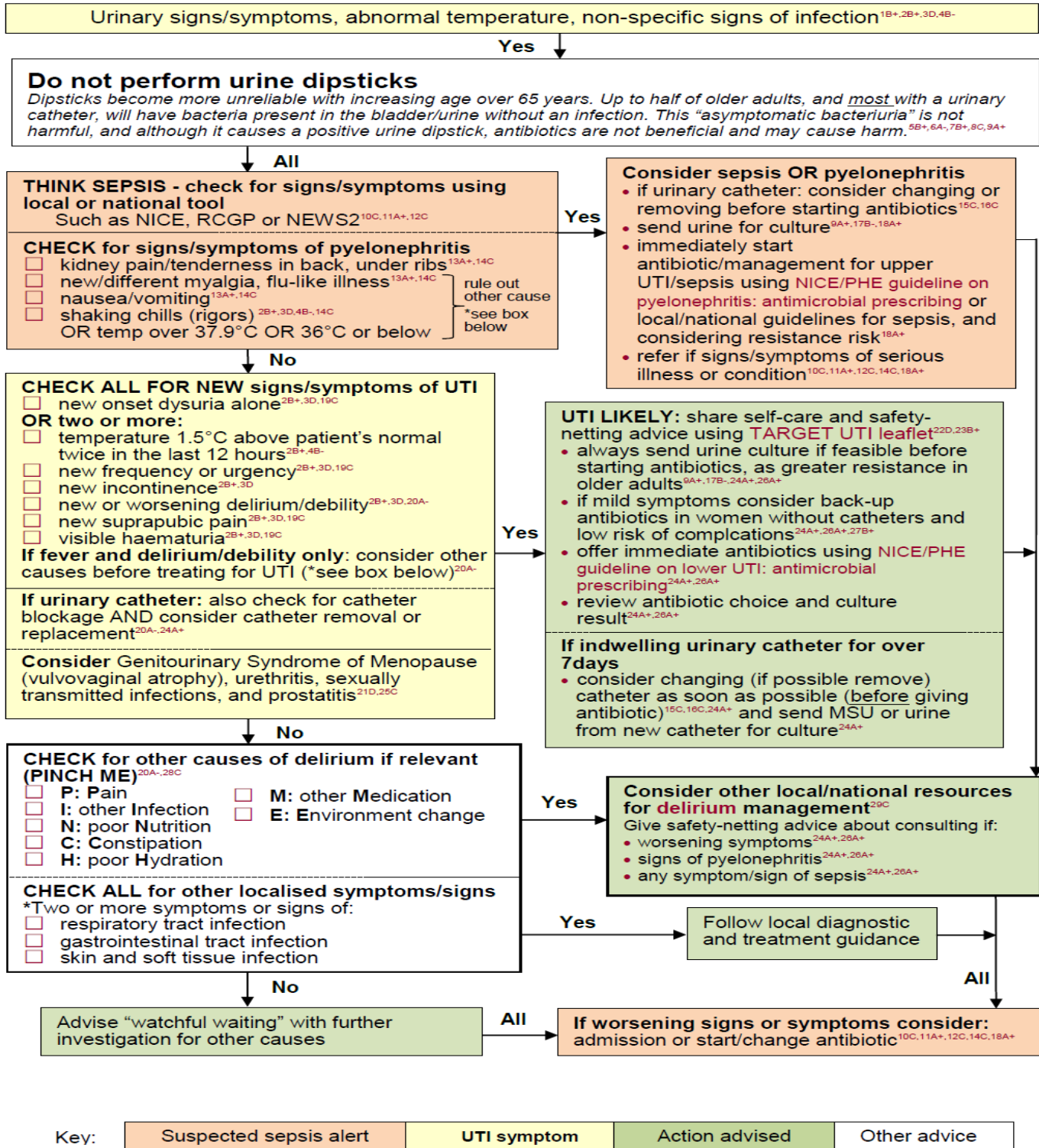
Dehydration is a recognised cause of UTI and dehydration is more commonly found in older people. Advice to care home staff in a patient with a positive dipstick result but no clinical signs of infection should include ensuring the resident/ patient does not become dehydrated.

The NHS website 'Think Kidneys' contains lots of resources for care homes about dehydration and kidney injury. They recommend considering the following to improve fluid intake in residents.

1. Encourage residents to drink regularly throughout the day and offer drinks if giving care at night.
2. Use a cup suitable for the resident—they may prefer to use a straw if a cup is difficult
3. Consider jelly or other foods with a high water content to increase fluid intake
4. Encourage regular toileting for residents who are continent. Important to ensure any bacteria are flushed out and urine does not stagnate in the bladder.
5. Act quickly to resolve constipation, it can stop the bladder from emptying fully, as the bowel can press on the bladder.

The following flowchart has been produced to provide guidance in diagnosing UTI in primary care in adults over 65 years of age:

### Flowchart for men and women over 65 years with suspected UTI



Key:	Suspected sepsis alert	UTI symptom	Action advised	Other advice
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References	<a href="https://www.sthelensccg.nhs.uk/media/2168/tdontd-training-handbook-dip-no-logo.pdf">https://www.sthelensccg.nhs.uk/media/2168/tdontd-training-handbook-dip-no-logo.pdf</a> <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755889/PHE_UTI_flowchart_-_over_65.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755889/PHE_UTI_flowchart_-_over_65.pdf</a>
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