This guidance aims to provide Governance around the use of the term “specialist” in the context of prescribing medicines. The guidance applies to prescribers within Cardiff and Vale UHB including independent contractors providing NHS commissioned services. Guidance relating to private providers is available separately. The guidance applies to all professional groups including Medical, Nursing, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Optometry.

This guidance must be considered alongside the Cardiff and Vale UHB framework of prescribing principles, defined within UHB prescribing pathways or guidelines.

A specialist prescriber can initiate treatment independently but should prescribe responsibly, complying with professional standards. The specialist prescriber must also be mindful of decisions made by the corporate Medicines Management Group in recognition of the financial and organisational impact of new and developing services and therapies. The [British National Formulary (BNF)](https://bnf.nice.org.uk/medicines-guidance/non-medical-prescribing/) maintains a current list of medications, appropriate for each professional group to prescribe, and also includes, a Nurse and Dental formulary.

If the above principles apply, an individual may self-determine specialist prescriber status based upon the following;

* Is suitably qualified as an independent prescriber, specialising within their own scope of practice and being accountable for prescribing actions undertaken.
* The Clinician is considered an expert by peers i.e. regularly asked for advice on subject matter.
* The Clinician has recognisable credentials to evidence training, competence and capability as a subject matter expert for the specialism in question.
* The Clinician regularly maintains competence in the Specialist area, including knowledge of current evidence and research.
* The Clinician has an appreciation of, and Clinical Practice aligning with, current internal UHB and nationally endorsed guidance e.g. NICE

**N.B.** Clinicians who recommend that another colleague, prescribes a particular medicine for a patient, must consider their competence to do so

**N.B.** Individuals who are asked to prescribe a medicine based on the recommendation of another doctor, nurse or other healthcare professional, must be satisfied that the prescription is needed, appropriate for the patient and within the limits of your competence.