

Pharmacy First Clinical Pathways Update

Pharmacy First Clinical Pathways changes

October 2025

For all clinical pathways:

Key changes:

Link to NICE CKS

Link to
NICE CKS

Link to NHS
website

(www.nhs.uk)

Red flag consideration

Consider the risk
of deterioration,
red flags or
serious illness

- Links to NICE CKS and NHS website
- More emphasis on red flag consideration
- Addition of gateway point for urgent escalation to A&E or calling 999 for all pathways
- Clarification of definitions on certain pathways

Links to the updated documents can be found here: [NHS England » Community pharmacy advanced service specification: NHS Pharmacy First Service](#)

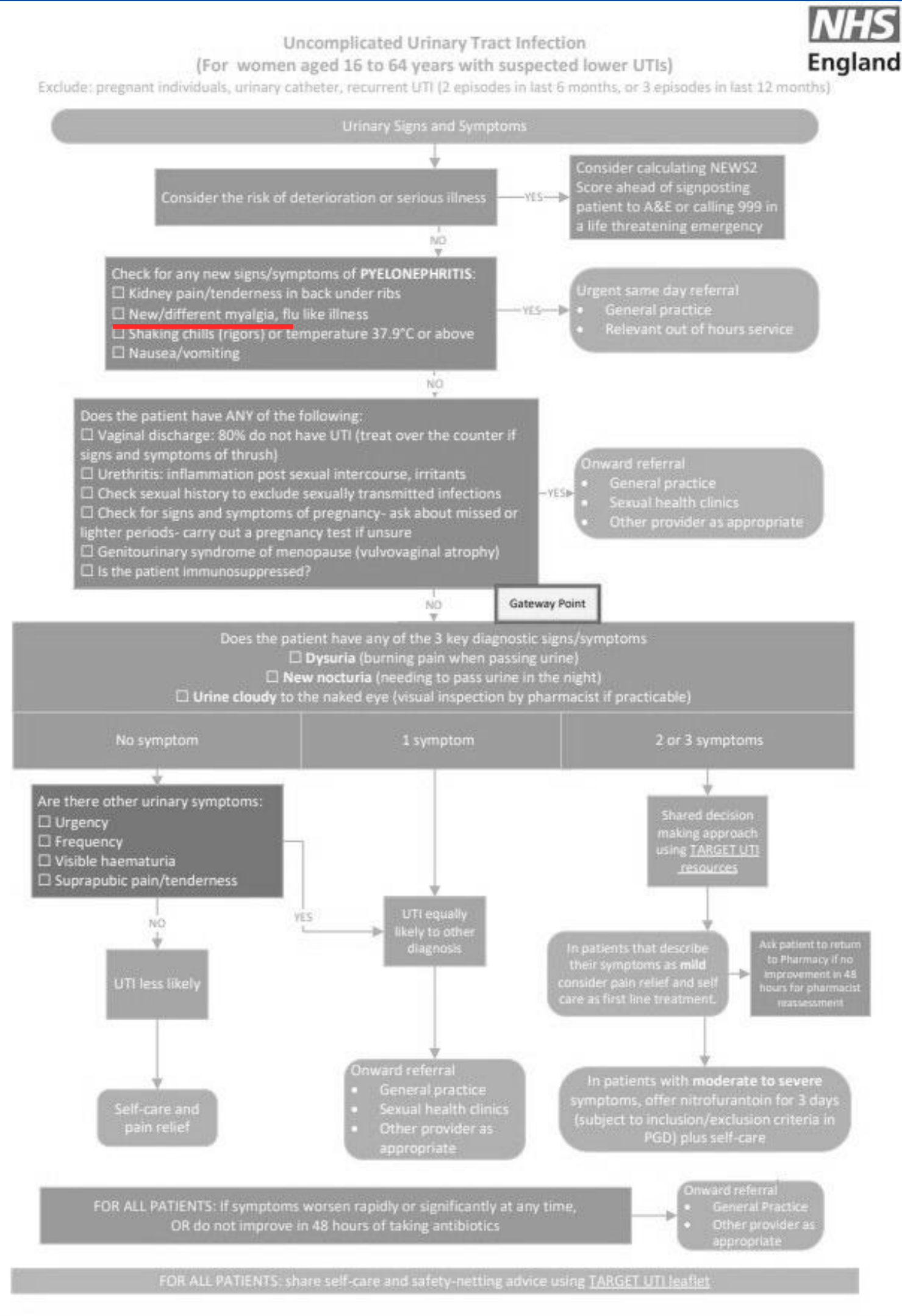
To note:

Commencement of use of the new clinical pathways, PGDs and protocol is Wednesday 1st October 2025.

IT system suppliers are planning to amend their existing systems to incorporate the updates on the night of 30th September 2025 however contractors are advised to ensure these changes have been implemented on their individual systems.

Disclaimer:

These are the changes as highlighted by Community Pharmacy Surrey and Sussex for contractors reference. Please note, it remains the responsibility of all clinicians delivering the service to ensure they have read and understood the changes. This is not an exhaustive list of the changes therefore clinicians will need to read the documents published by NHS England and ensure they are confident in providing the service, are practising safely and in line with the service specification.



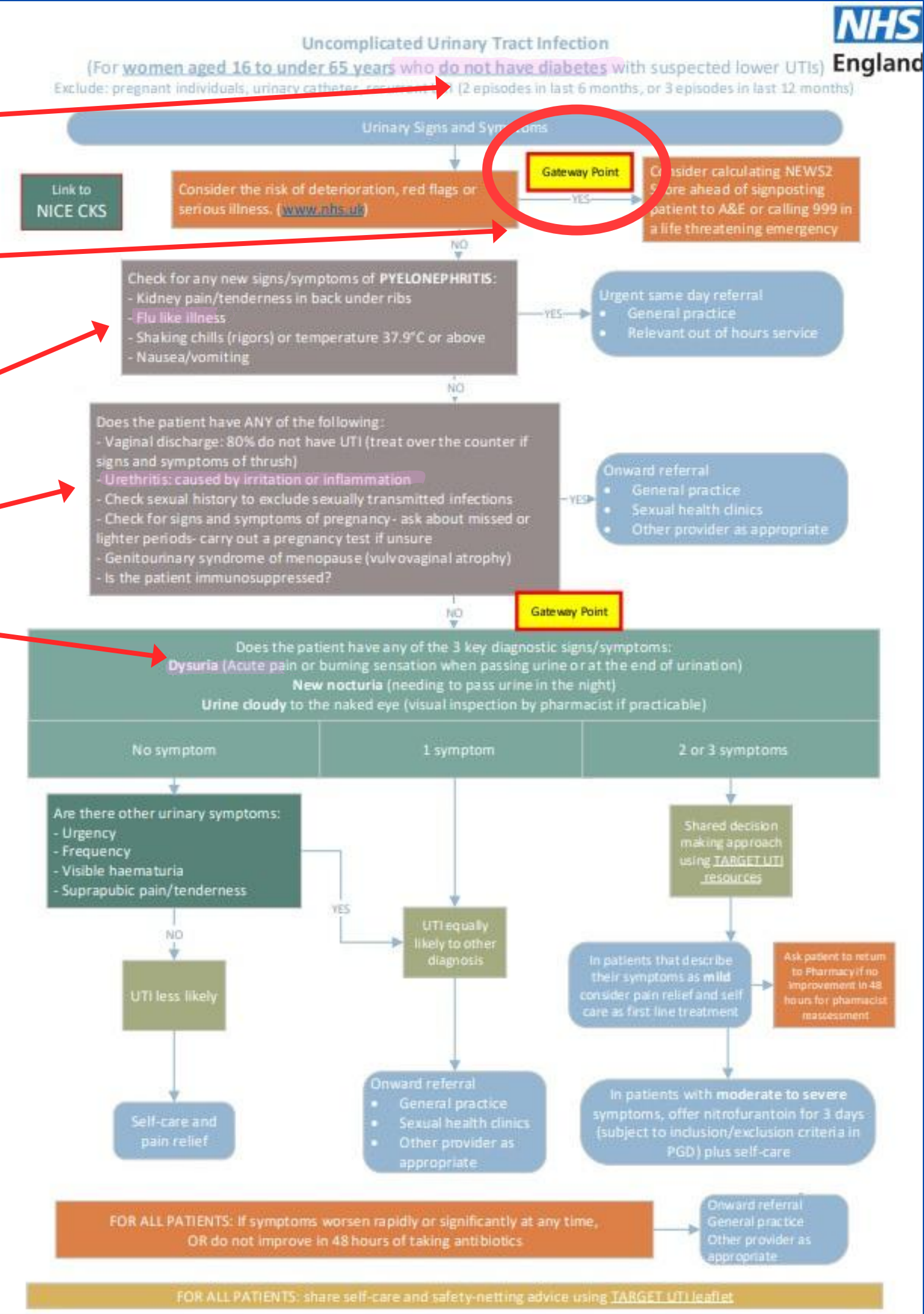
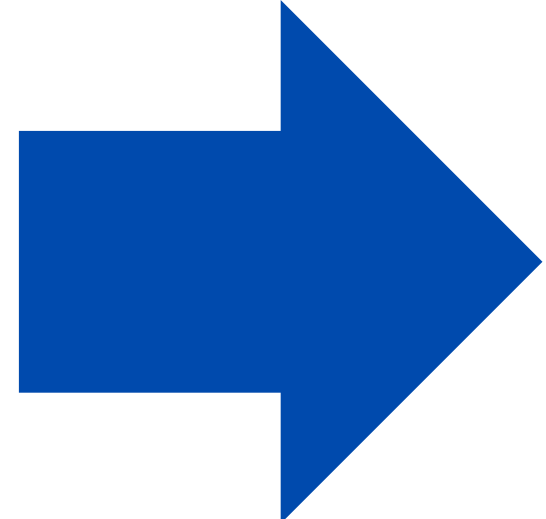
Women with diabetes excluded

New gateway point for escalating to A&E or calling 999

Pyelonephritis clarified

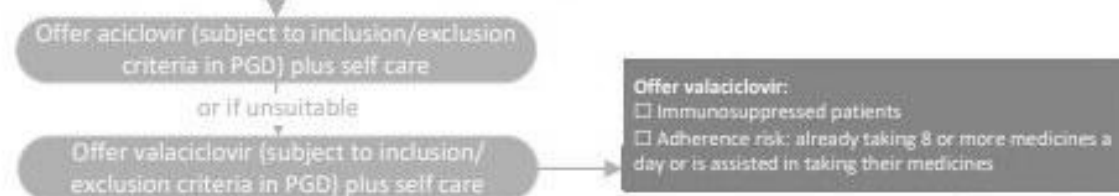
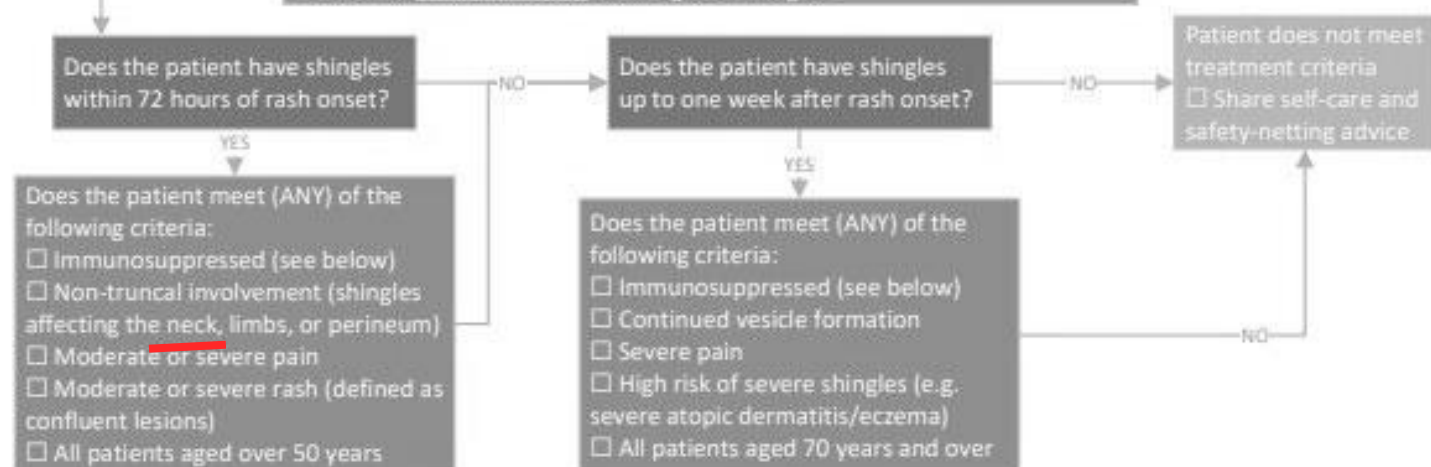
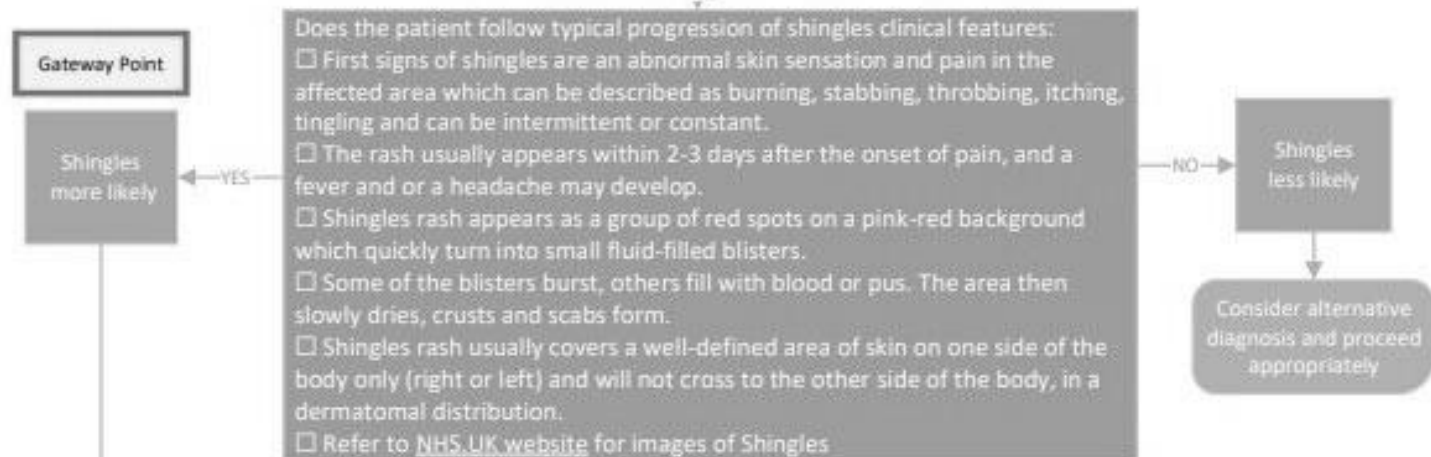
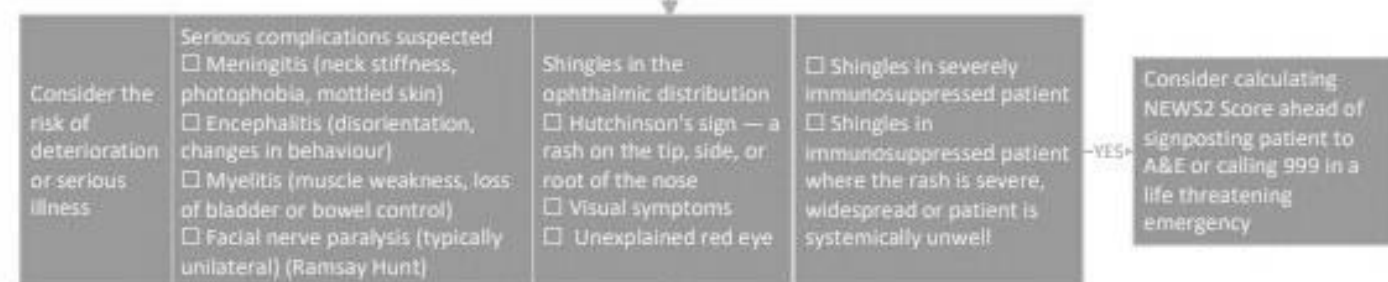
Urethritis clarified

Dysuria clarified



Shingles (for adults aged 18 years and over) Exclude: pregnant individuals

Diagnose shingles on the basis of typical clinical features



FOR ALL PATIENTS: If symptoms worsen rapidly or significantly at any time, OR do not improve after completion of 7 days treatment course

Onward referral

- General Practice
- Other provider as appropriate

FOR IMMUNOSUPPRESSED PATIENTS:

- ☐ Offer treatment if appropriate and call patient's GP or send urgent for action email if out of hours to notify supply of antiviral and request review by GP
- ☐ Advise patient, if your symptoms worsen rapidly or if you become systemically unwell or the rash becomes severe or widespread - attend A&E or call 999

FOR ALL PATIENTS:

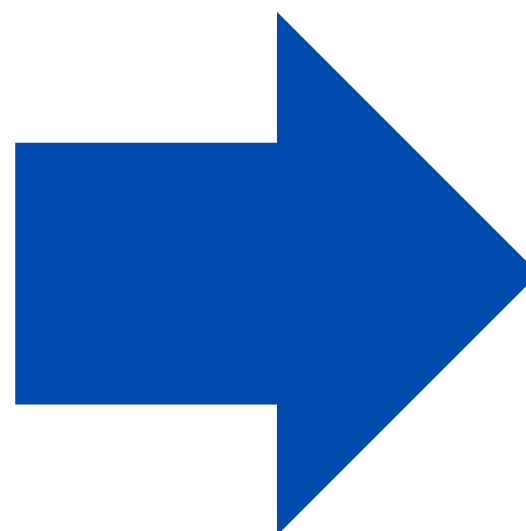
- ☐ Share self-care and safety-netting advice using [British Association of Dermatologists Shingles leaflet](#)
- ☐ For pain management recommend a trial of paracetamol, a NSAID such as ibuprofen, or co-codamol over the counter. If this is not effective, refer patient to general practice
- ☐ Signpost eligible individuals to information and advice about receiving the shingles vaccine after they have recovered from this episode of shingles

New gateway point for escalating to A&E or calling 999

Shingles affecting the head and neck added as red flag for onward referral

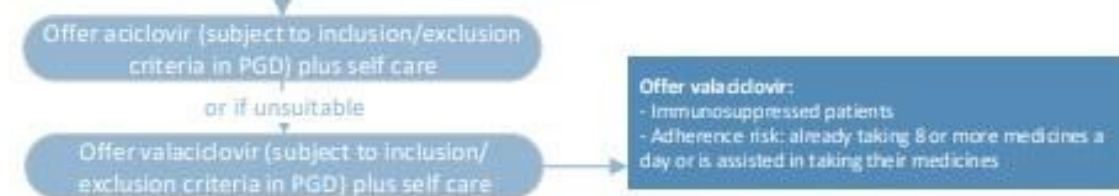
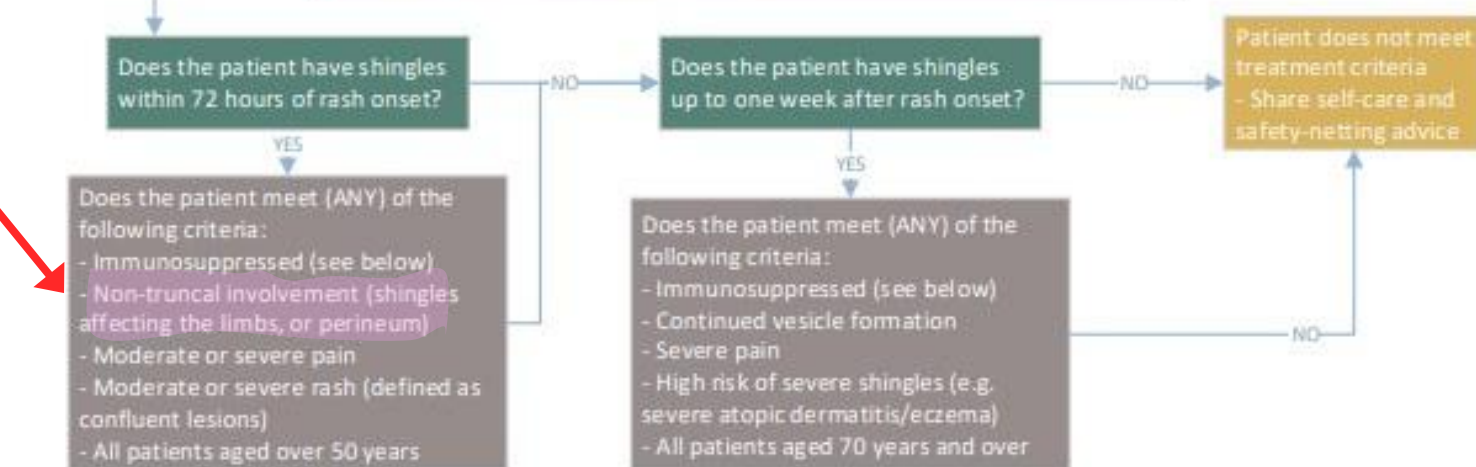
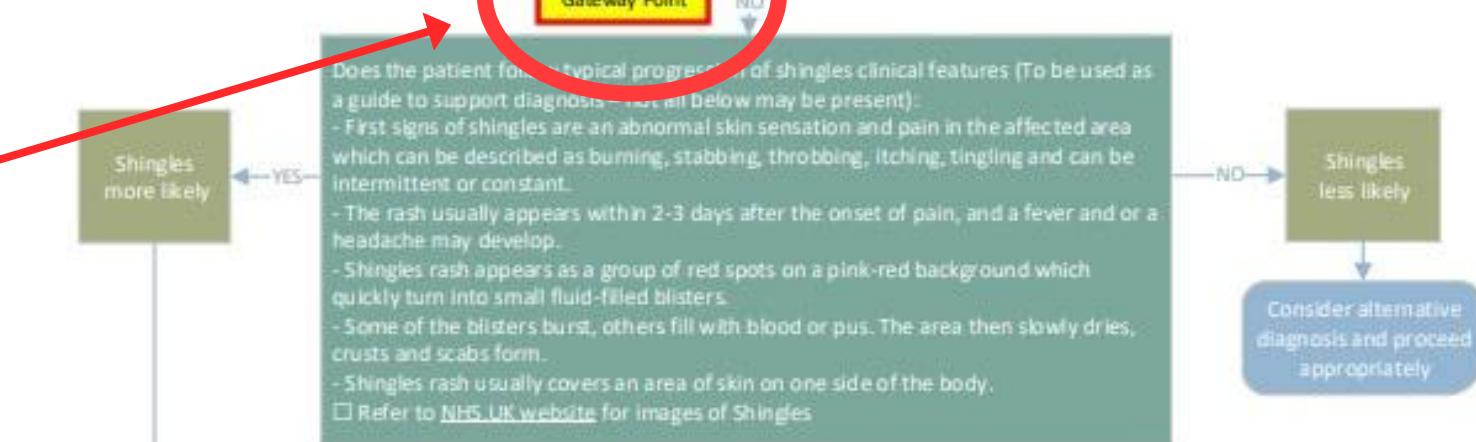
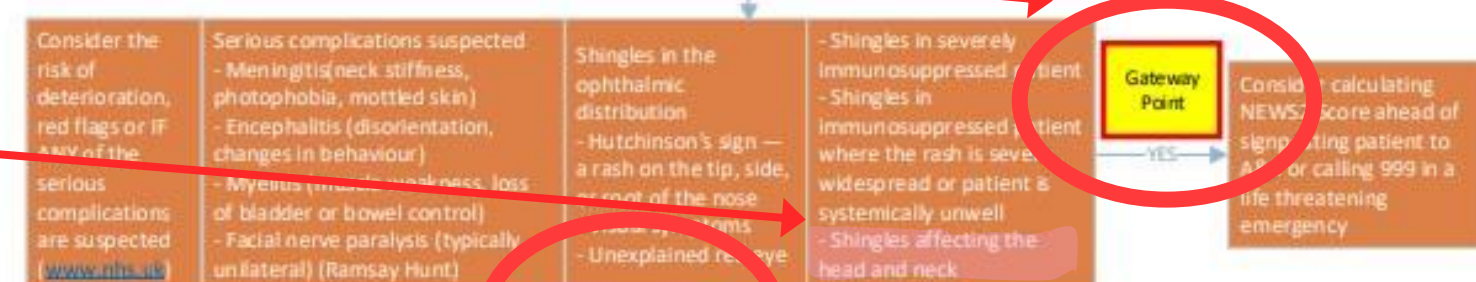
Gateway point moved so any suspicion of shingles in claimable

Non-truncal defined as limbs or perineum



Shingles (for adults aged 18 years and over) Exclude: pregnant individuals

Diagnose shingles on the basis of typical clinical features



FOR ALL PATIENTS: If symptoms worsen rapidly or significantly at any time, OR do not improve after completion of 7 days treatment course

Onward referral

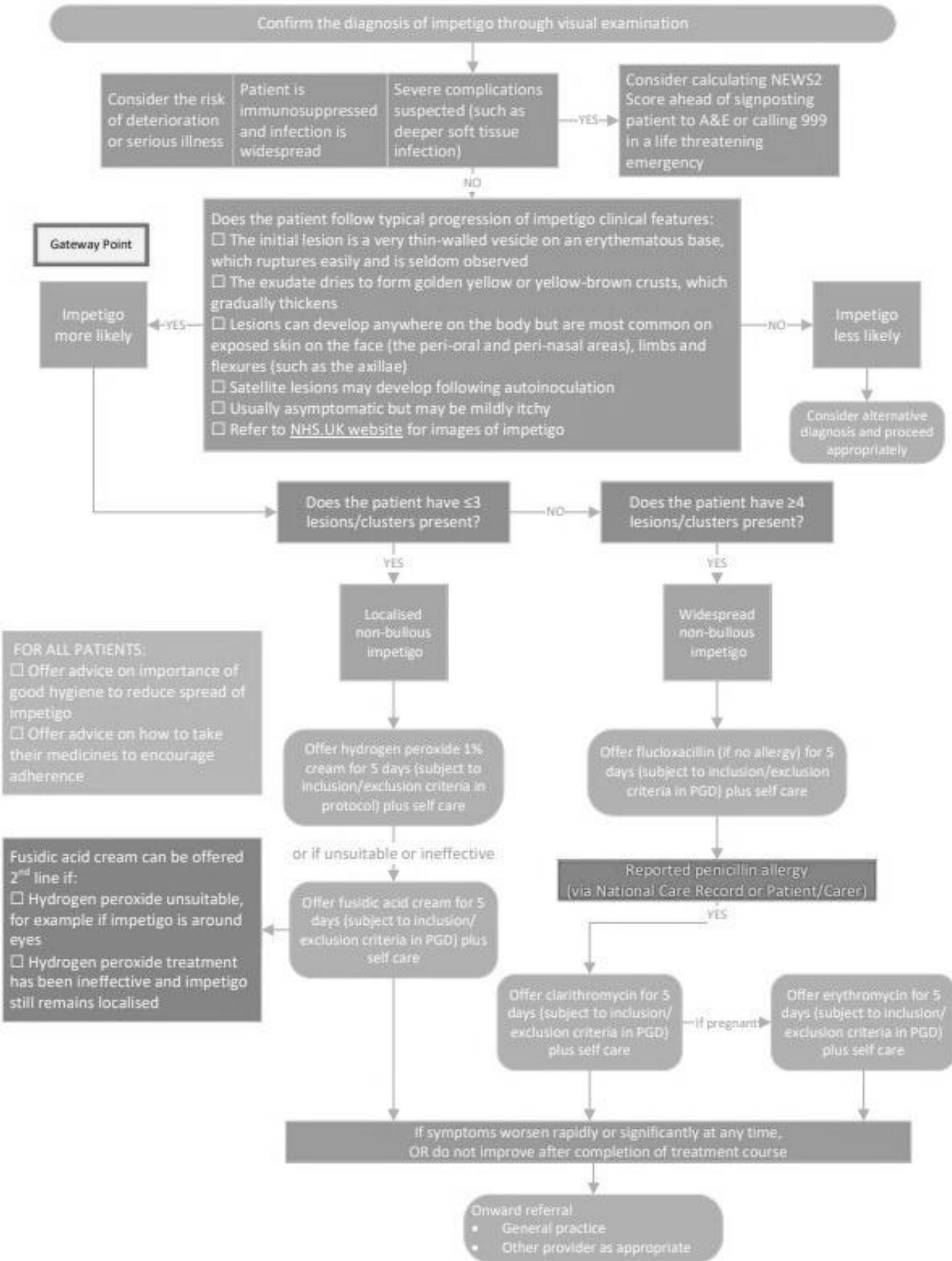
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- Other provider as appropriate

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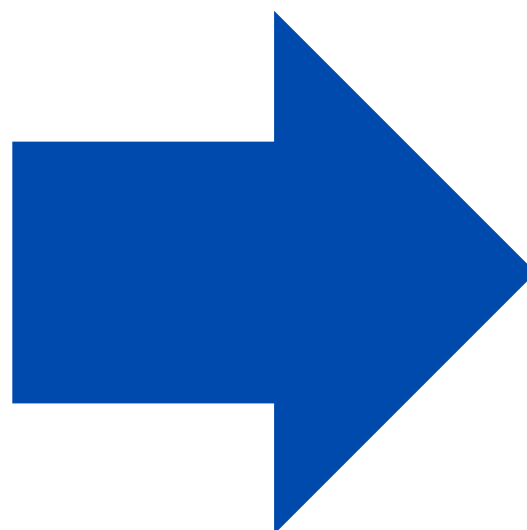
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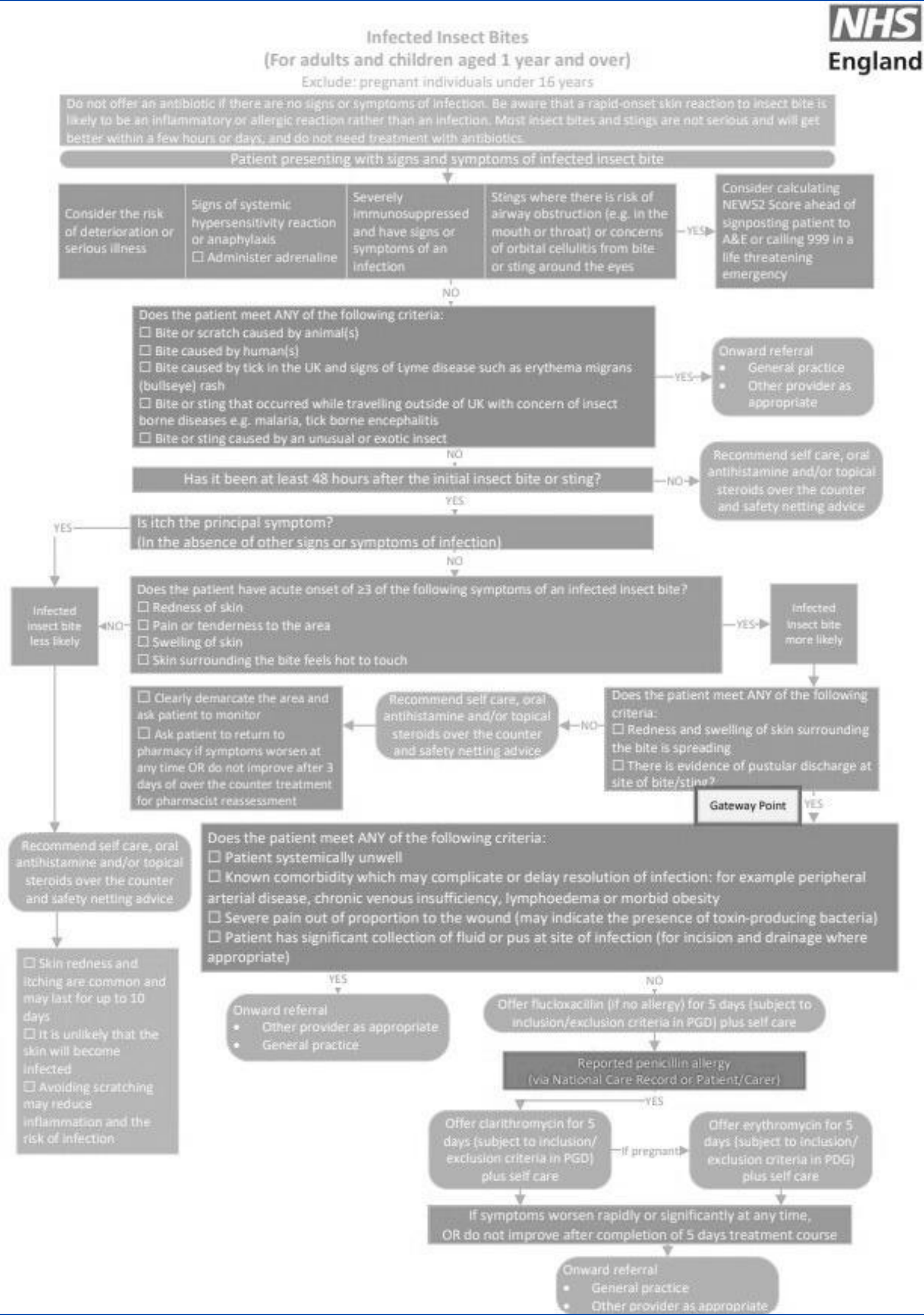


Examination must take place in consultation room

New gateway point for escalating to A&E or calling 999

Gateway point moved so
any suspicion of Impetigo
is claimable

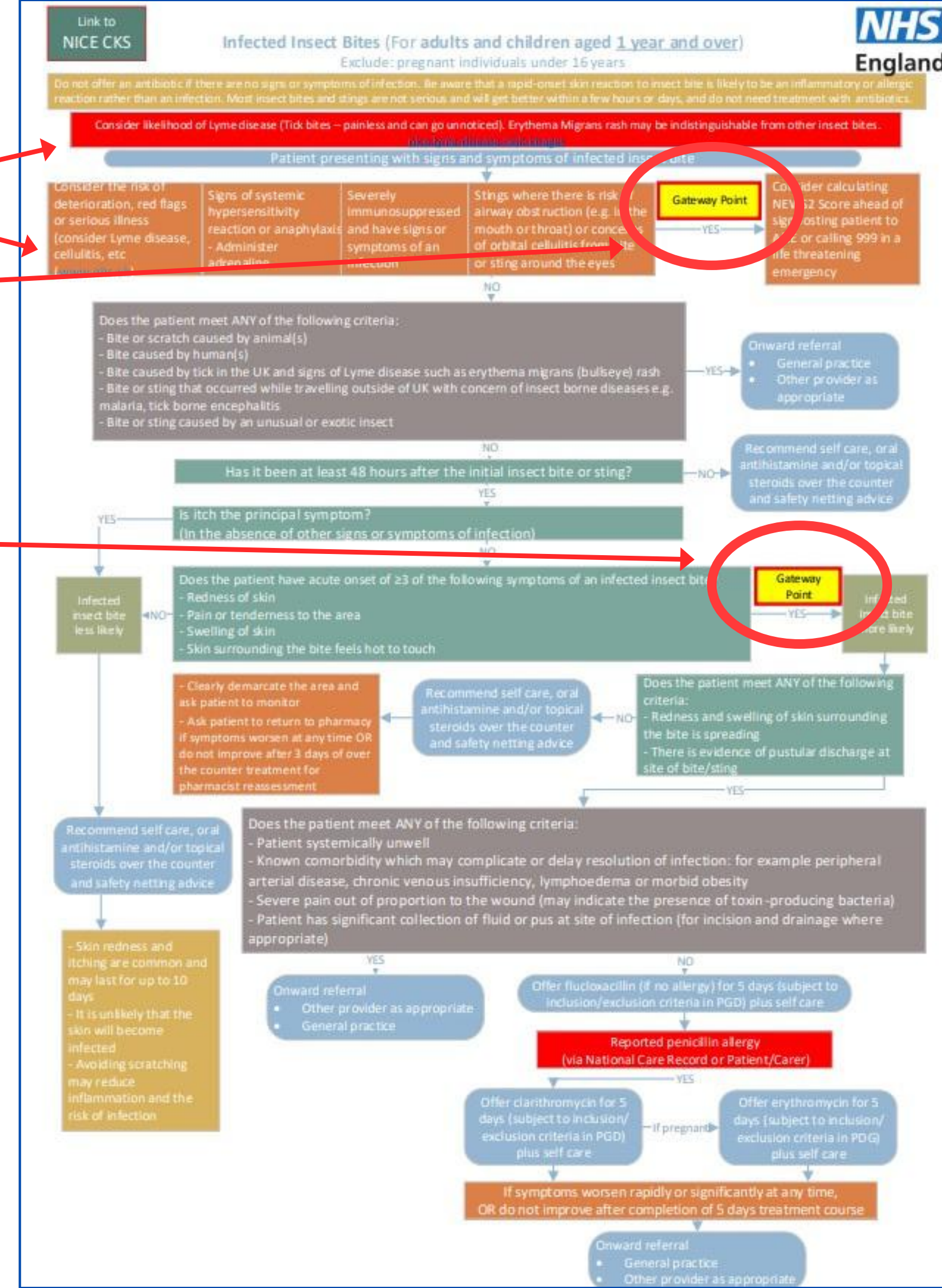
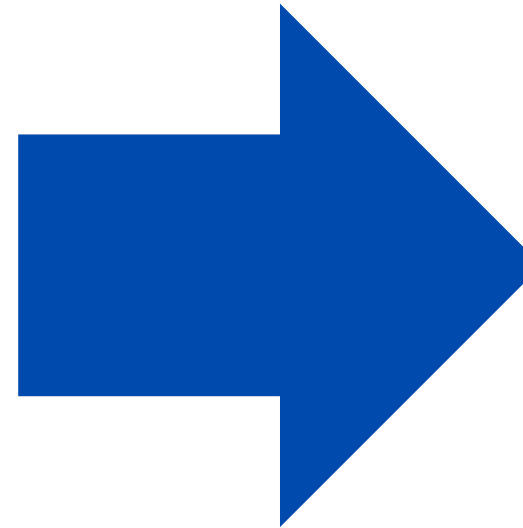


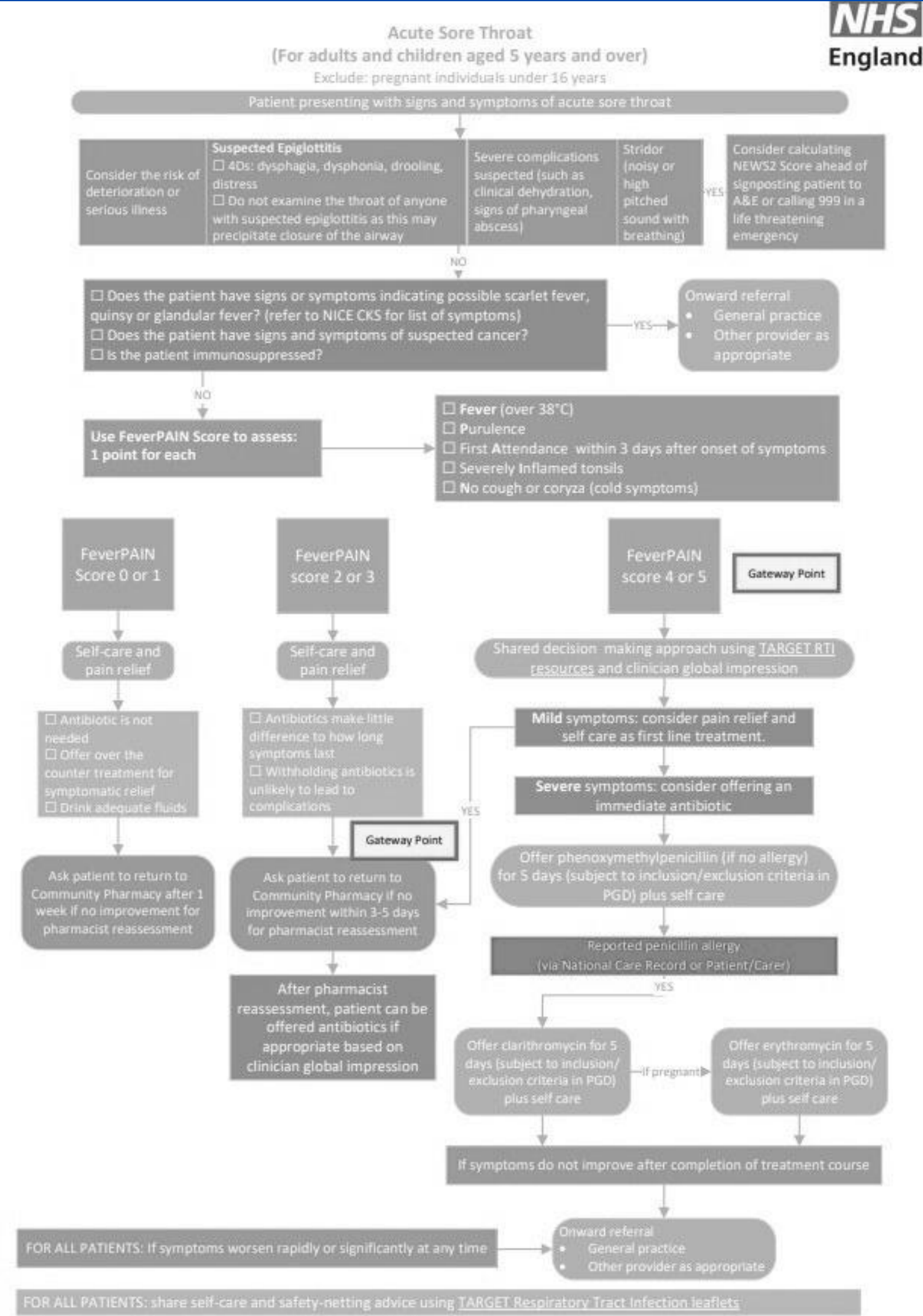


New red flags to consider added

New gateway point for escalating to A&E or calling 999

Gateway point moved to allow claiming for self care advice





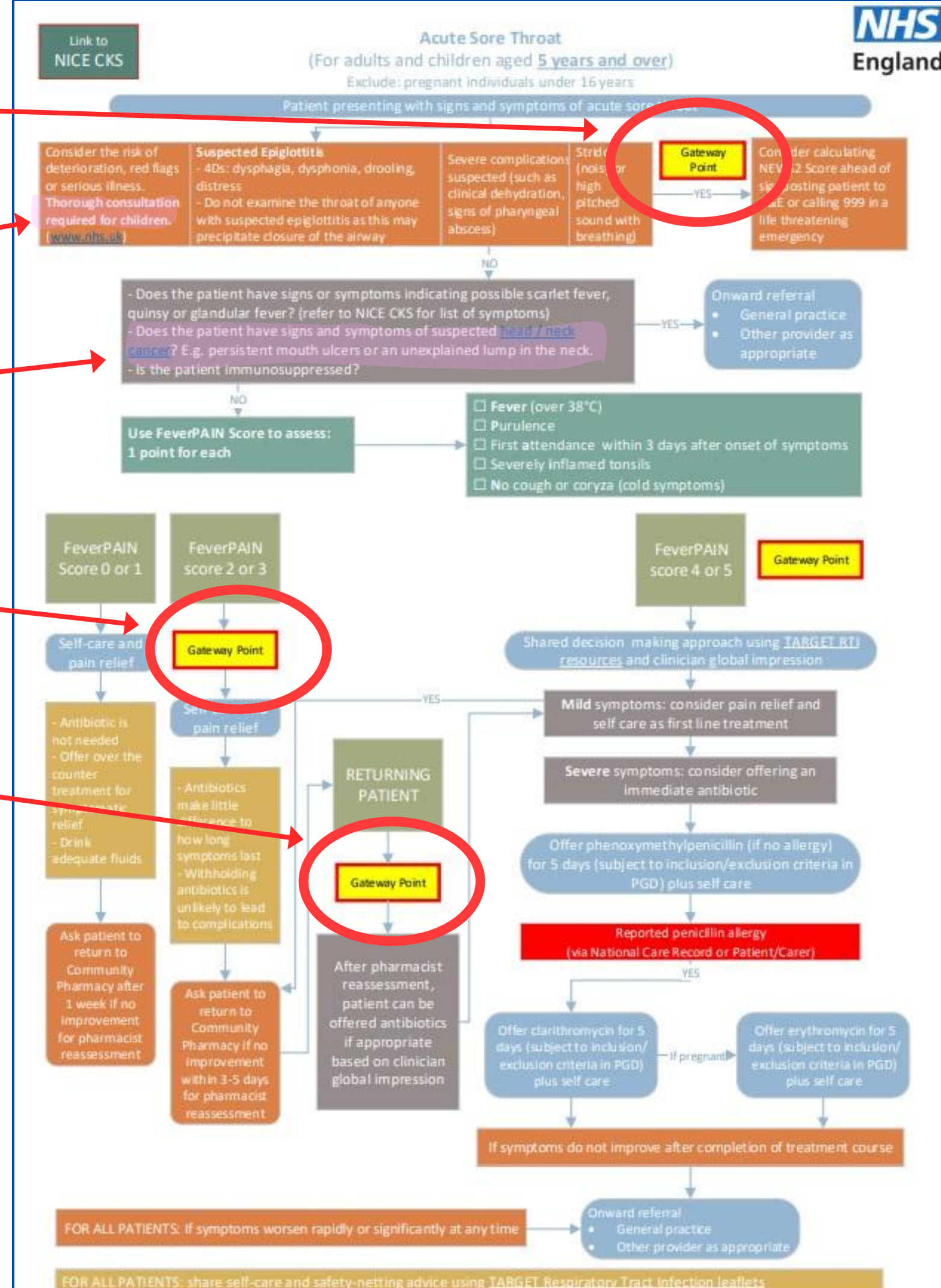
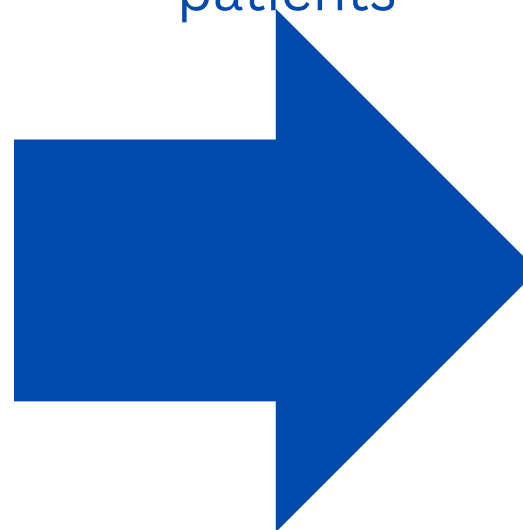
New gateway point added for escalating to A&E or calling 999

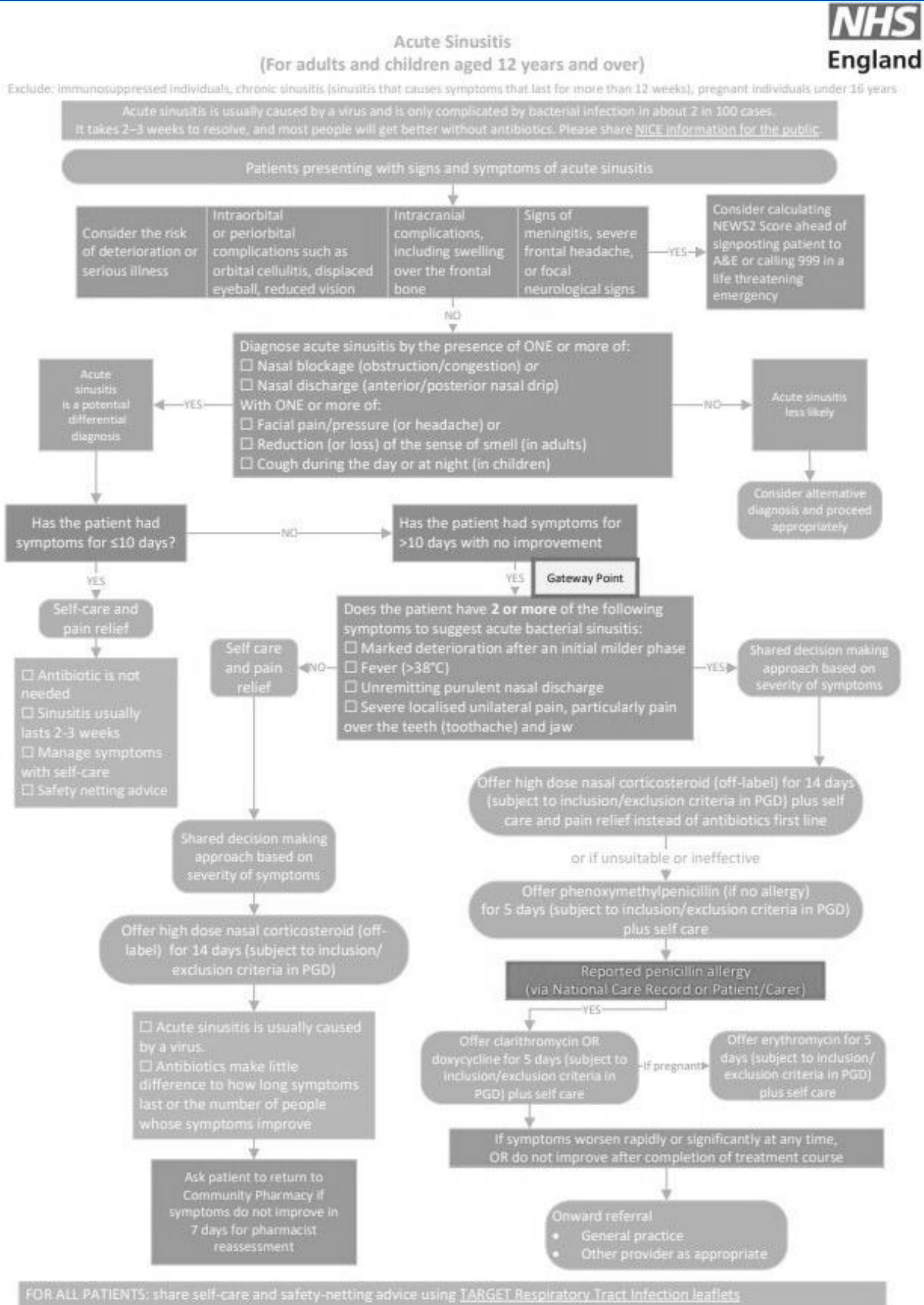
Children require a thorough consultation

Addition of possible signs of mouth/neck cancer

New gateway point added for self care advice if FeverPAIN score 2 or 3

New gateway point added for returning patients

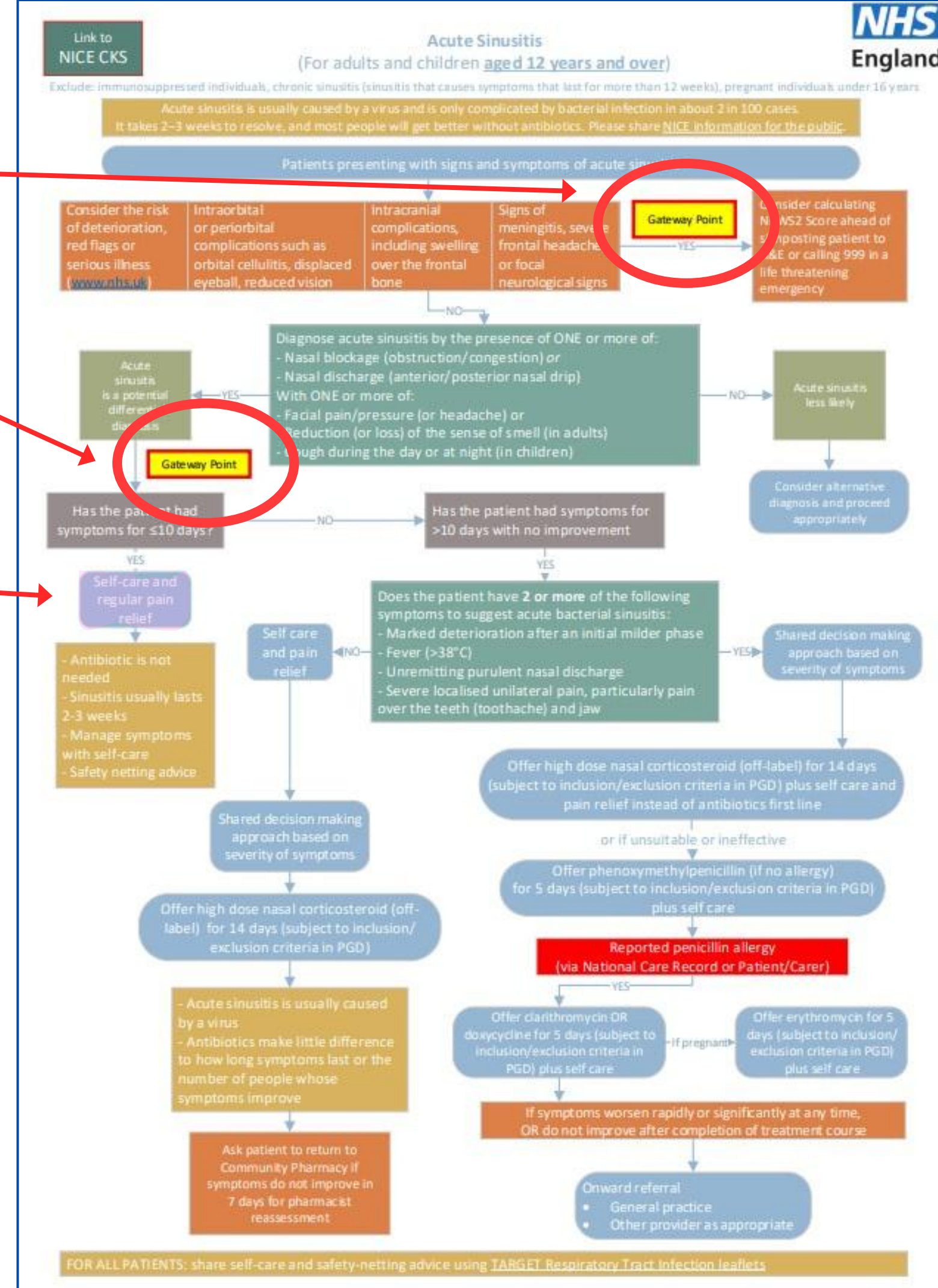
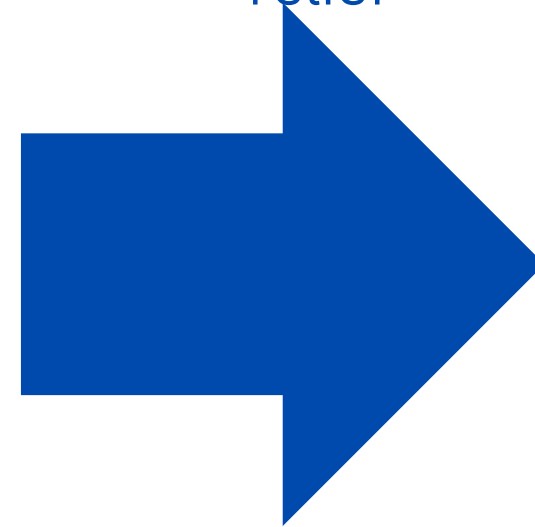


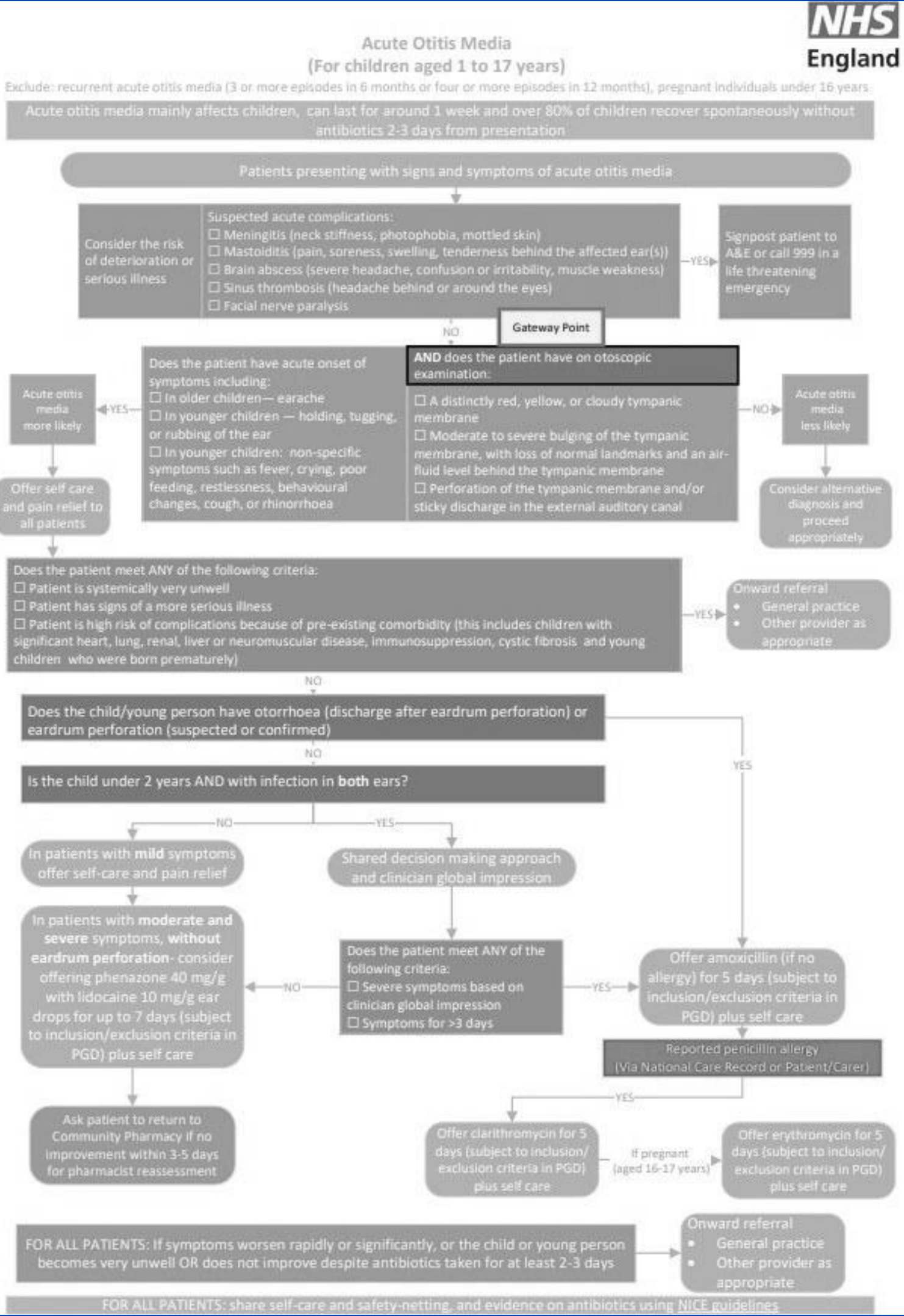


New gateway point added for escalating to A&E or calling 999

Gateway point moved to allow claiming for acute sinusitis as a potential differential diagnosis

Addition of regular pain relief

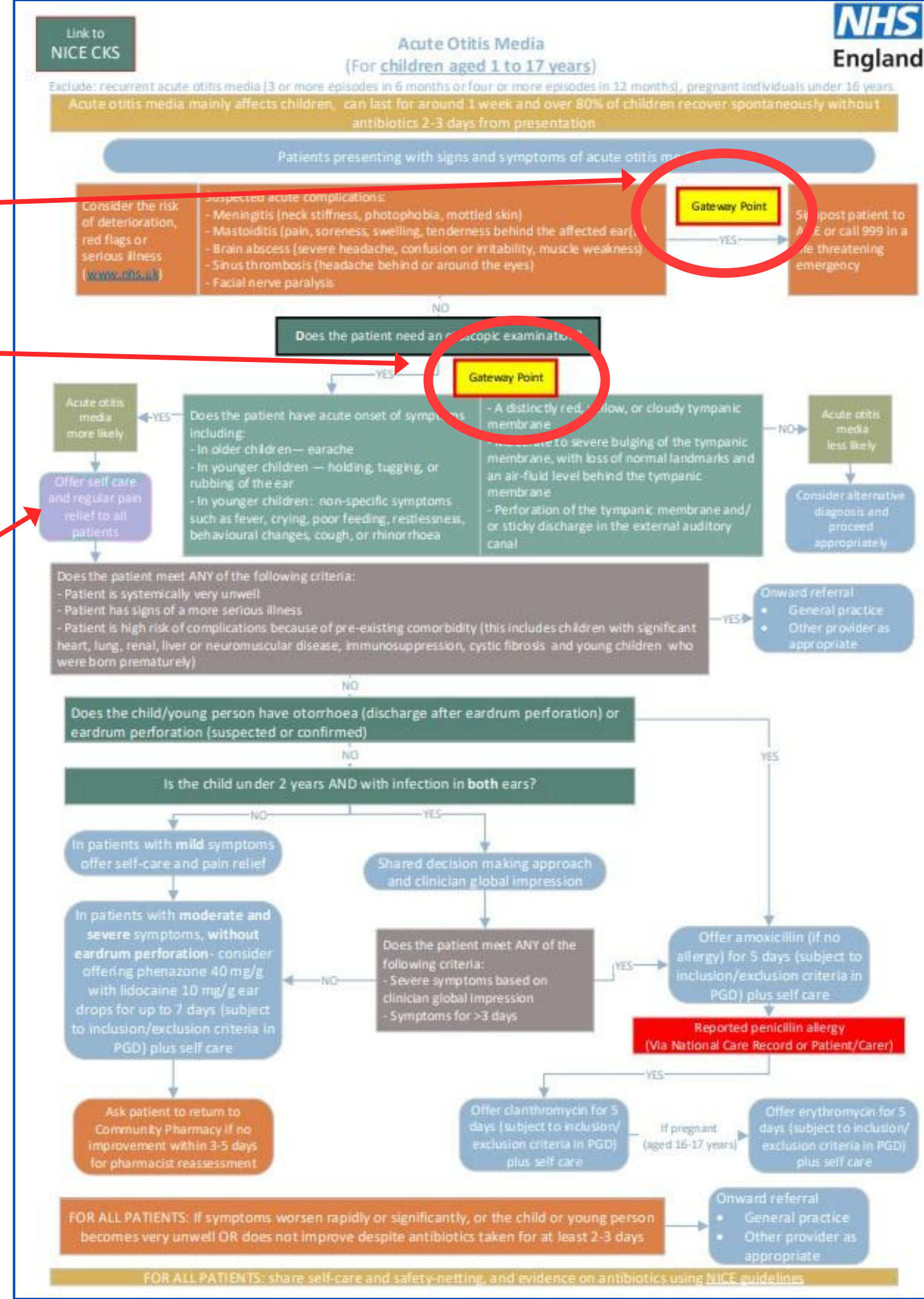
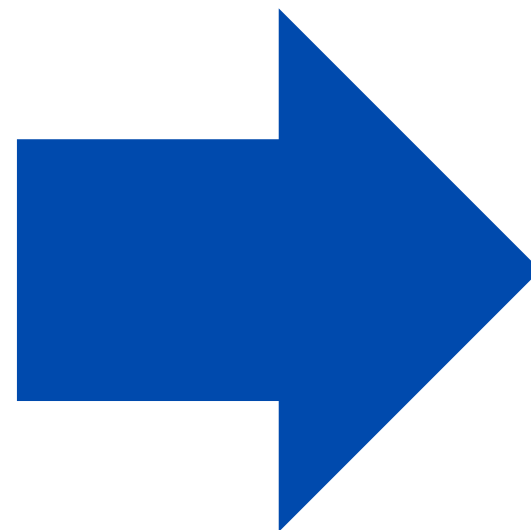




New gateway point added for escalating to A&E or calling 999

Gateway point moved for clearer otoscopic exam requirements

Addition of regular pain relief



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