

Temporary Operational Instruction

**Action note: 2025-05-06 – Chapter 2.1 of the
Manual for Official Controls (MOC) Title:
Veterinary Medicines Directorate’s cascade
principle for prescribing unauthorised
medicines**

Purpose

This action note is to inform operational staff of a new temporary operational instruction relating to [insert the subject here changes to VMD’s (Veterinary Medicines Directorate) cascade principle.

Background

Add in the background of how and why the temporary operational instruction has been initiated. On 17 May 2024 VMD updated their rules for the off-label use of medicines. These rules allow prescribing medicines that are not specifically authorised for a particular condition or species to be used only when no suitable authorised veterinary medicine is available in the UK for the condition being treated. The use of unauthorised medicines in species is currently covered in MOC in Chapter 2.1 (section **2.5.4 The Cascade principle in the use of medicines**). The change relates to withdrawal periods that are applicable when this principle is used.

Procedure

The new withdrawal periods as per annex 1 are to be used by OV's with immediate effect. The current MOC instruction is going to be updated with the next amendment to reflect the changes in the VMD guidance.

Note the contents of the action note, ensuring it is read by all front-line staff. Where necessary, print a copy for the plant file.

Note the contents of the action note, ensuring it is read by all front-line staff.

Where necessary, print a copy for the plant file.

Distribution

This action note will be:

- uploaded to the [Temporary Operational Instruction Folder held in the MOC area of SharePoint](#) (accessible only on an official FSA device)
- logged on the [Temporary Operational Instruction tracker](#) (accessible only on an official FSA device)

- published alongside the [MOC chapters on food.gov.uk](https://www.food.gov.uk/moc-chapters)

The action note will remain live until either incorporated into the MOC or revoked.

Annex

Published and date
12/05/2025