

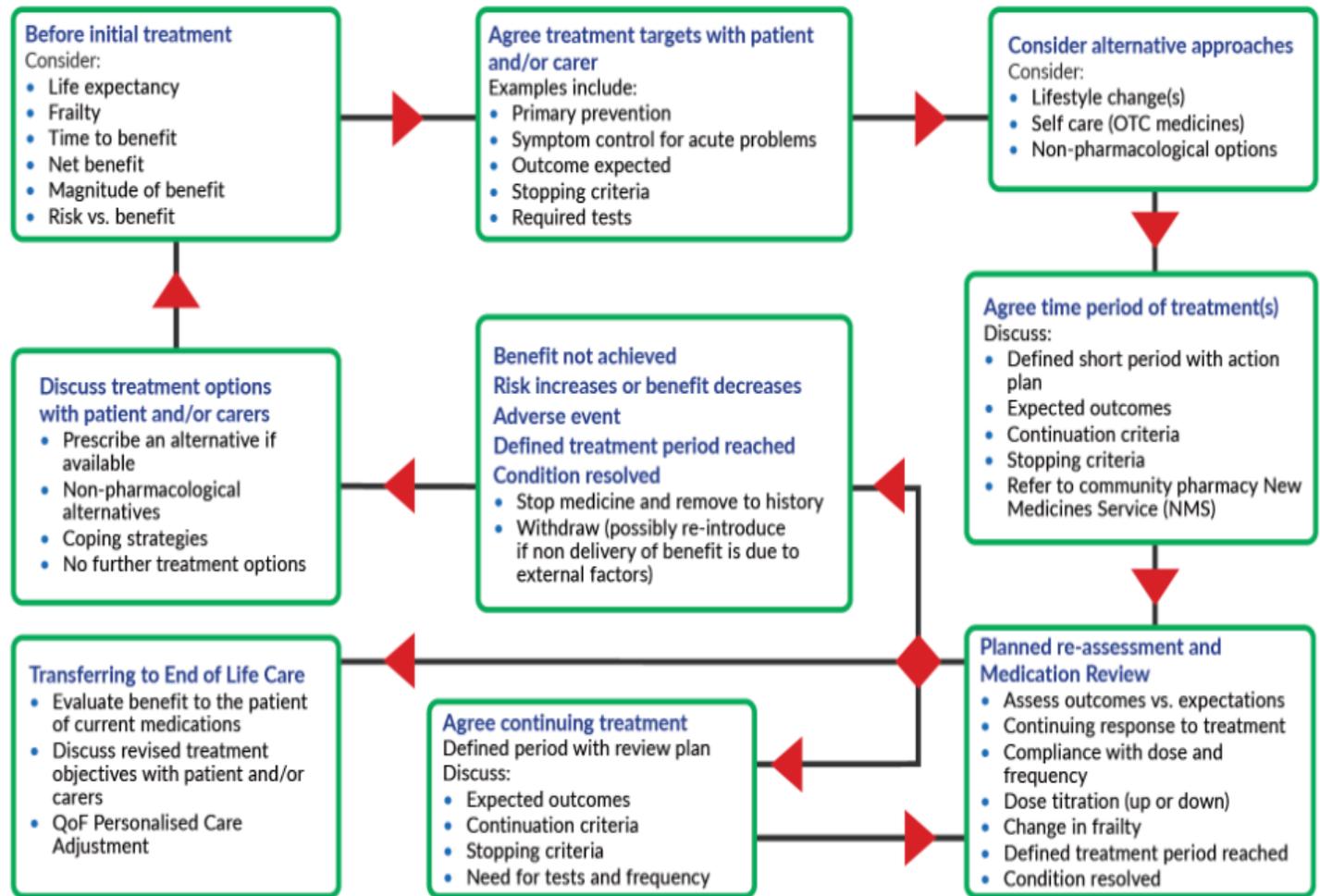
# Good prescribing - ensuring appropriate polypharmacy

This briefing supports the 'Ensuring appropriate polypharmacy' flowchart. It has been designed to support decision making at different stages of prescribing and medication review. The flowchart shows the steps in the process to engage patients fully in decisions about their treatment. Examples of key considerations at each step are provided.<sup>1</sup>

## Key recommendations

- When either prescribing a new treatment or deciding to deprescribe an existing treatment, prescribers should weigh up risk vs. benefit of the treatment, magnitude of expected benefit, net expected benefit, time to expected benefit, frailty and life expectancy.
- For all prescriptions, the prescriber must make sure that suitable arrangements are in place for monitoring, follow-up and review.
- Agree with the person the expected outcomes and time period of treatment upon initiation of treatment.
- Upon initiation of a new medicine and at a regular medication review, patients and/or their carers should be made aware of the likely adverse drug events (ADEs) to look out for and they should know what to do if they experience them.
- Prescribers should be aware of ADEs requiring review and possible substitution of therapy and be cautious about distinguishing them from a new disease to be treated with a new medication, which can result in the development of problematic polypharmacy or a prescribing cascade.

Figure1. Ensuring appropriate polypharmacy tool



## References

1. PrescQIPP. Polypharmacy and Deprescribing—Ensuring appropriate polypharmacy tool. <https://www.prescqipp.info/our-resources/webkits/polypharmacy-and-deprescribing/>

Additional resources available	Bulletin	<a href="https://www.prescqipp.info/news/bulletin-319-good-prescribing">https://www.prescqipp.info/news/bulletin-319-good-prescribing</a>
	Tools	

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