

West and North London (WNL) Position Statement Ensure® Plus Advance March 2026

Please note: This position statement applies to the following boroughs in NHS West and North London ICB: Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington

Ensure® Plus Advance (EPA), manufactured by Abbott Nutrition, is not recommended for prescribing in West and North London for any condition.

EPA formulation

- 220ml ready-to-drink oral nutritional supplement (ONS) for older adults (>65 years) who have, or are at risk of, malnutrition
- Each bottle provides 330kcal, 20g protein plus vitamins & minerals
- Some ONS products are marketed as being nutritionally beneficial as a result of containing specific nutrients. An example of such a product is EPA, which contains hydroxymethylbutyrate (HMB).

Formulary review

- The NCL JFC considered the evidence for EPA in [November 2020](#), and concluded that results do not support any claim that EPA is a superior product versus placebo, and by extension, to alternative recommendations for ONS products. The NCL Nutrition Group reviewed the evidence in October 2025 and concluded that no changes are required to the content of the position statement.

Cost-effectiveness

- EPA is premium priced compared to other ONS products which contain equivalent energy, protein and micronutrients (without HMB)
- The calories and protein provided by EPA can be obtained by food fortification (or, if an ONS is clinically indicated, a powdered shake or standard ready-to-drink ONS)
- As evidence to support the clinical benefits of HMB is insufficient, alternative cost effective and clinically appropriate ONS products should be used instead of EPA in malnourished patients who meet the criteria for prescribing in the community.

ONS alternatives available

EPA can be substituted with the following alternatives:

Nutritional supplement	Energy (per serving)	Protein (per serving)	Cost per day (2 servings)	Cost per month (28 days)
Ensure® Plus Advance	330kcal	20g	£4.40	£138.32
Fortified Horlicks *	319kcal	19g	£0.96p *	£26.88*
Aymes® Shake	383kcal	19g	£1.14	£32.16

*Homemade supplement using full fat milk, skimmed milk powder & Horlicks
Price data taken from dm+d and Tesco website (March 2026)

There are no exclusions to this Position Statement.

References

1. Deutz NE, Matheson EM, Matarese LE, Luo M, Baggs GE, Nelson JL, Hegazi RA, Tappenden KA, Ziegler TR; Nourish Study Group. Readmission and mortality in malnourished hospitalised adults treated with a specialised oral nutritional supplement: A randomised clinical trial. *Clinical Nutrition*, 2016 Feb; 35 (1): 18-26. Available at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0261561415003489>.

Groups / Individuals who have overseen the development of this guidance:	NCL Nutrition Group and JFC Support
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