On 22nd January 2024 the MHRA issued a Drug Safety Update regarding the use of fluoroquinolones, stating that they should only be used in situations when other antibiotics are inappropriate.

<https://www.gov.uk/drug-safety-update/fluoroquinolone-antibiotics-must-now-only-be-prescribed-when-other-commonly-recommended-antibiotics-are-inappropriate>

This goes further than previous measures to limit the prescribing of fluoroquinolones, introduced in 2019. Serious side effects include tendonitis or tendon rupture, muscle pain/weakness, joint pain/swelling, peripheral neuropathy, and CNS/psychiatric effects. These adverse events do not appear to be dose-related and are reported in patients irrespective of age or potential risk factors.

Several of the BASHH clinical guidelines recommend the use of fluoroquinolones. Clinicians are advised to prescribe fluoroquinolones only when judged to be the most appropriate treatment for the patient’s infection after considering factors such as likely causative organisms, antimicrobial resistance factors, the availability of alternative agents, and pharmacological considerations such as tissue penetration.