

To: **South East London primary care colleagues**

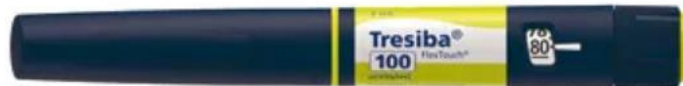
**December 2023**

**National patient safety alert – Potential for inappropriate dosing of insulin when switching Tresiba® (insulin degludec) products.**

The Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) released a [Medication Supply Notification \(MSN\)](#) highlighting that Tresiba® (insulin degludec) FlexTouch® 100 units/ml solution for injection 3ml pre-filled pens will be out of stock from August 2023 until January 2024, **this has been extended until December 2024.**

In response to the shortage some patients have been switched to alternative options inappropriately which has led to cases of hospitalisation with diabetic ketoacidosis, therefore a national patient safety alert has been issued with actions **to be completed by 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023**

Figure 1: Tresiba® 100 units/ml FlexTouch® Pen



For the duration of the shortage do **NOT** newly initiate patients on Tresiba® (insulin degludec) FlexTouch 100 units/ml pre-filled pens

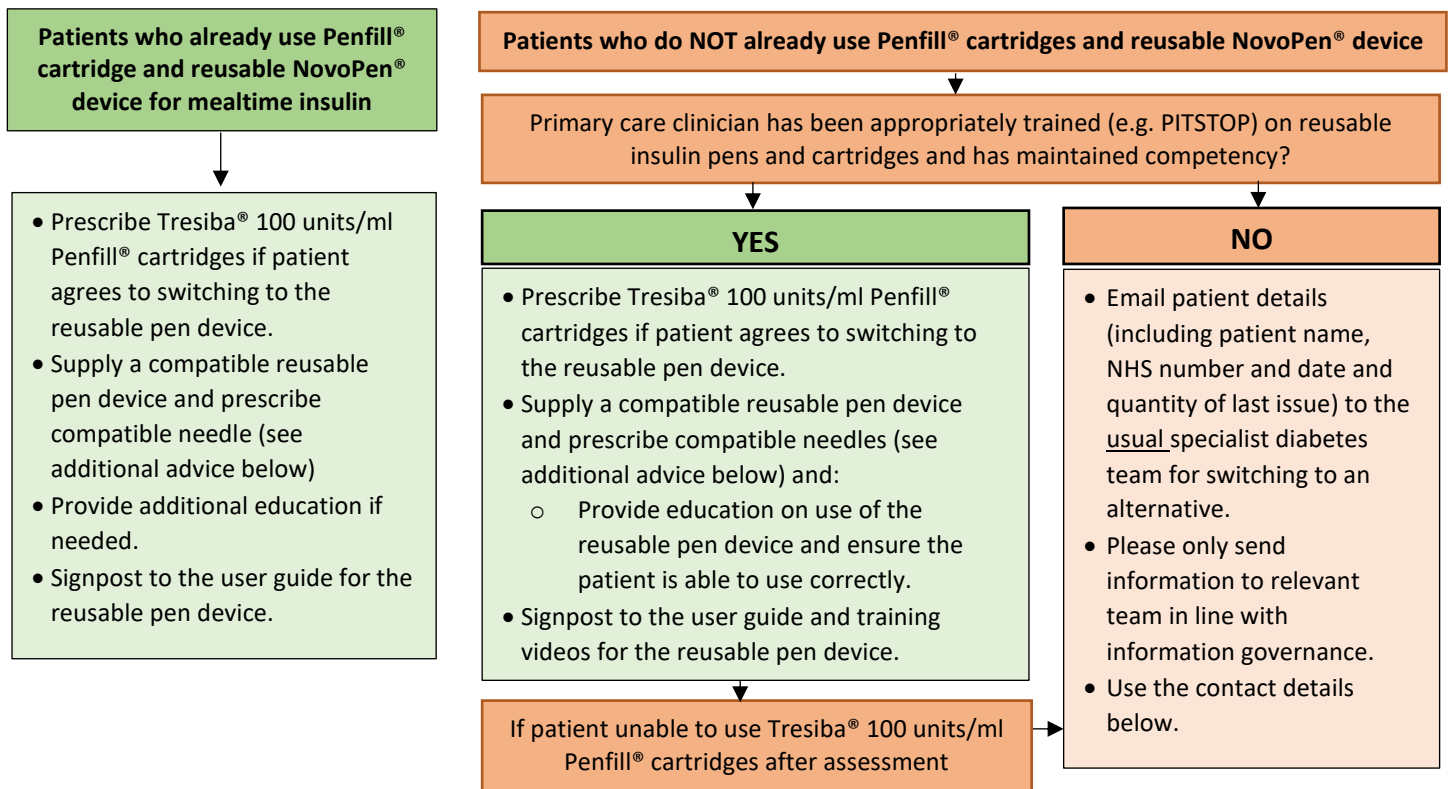
**Actions for primary care clinicians in response to the NPSA alert:**

1. Ensure all patients switched to Tresiba® (insulin degludec) FlexTouch® 200 units/ml pre-filled pens due to the ongoing shortage are made aware that:
  - No dose change is necessary when switching from Tresiba® (insulin degludec) FlexTouch® 100 units/ml pre-filled pens.
  - Tresiba® (insulin degludec) FlexTouch® 200 units/ml pre-filled pens dial up in 2 unit dose increments
2. Ensure all patients switched to Tresiba® (insulin degludec) 100 units/ml Penfill® cartridge:
  - Have been supplied a reusable pen device, appropriate needles and is able to administer Tresiba® (insulin degludec).
3. Identify all patients currently prescribed Tresiba® (insulin degludec) FlexTouch® 100 units/ml pre-filled pens:
  - Notify patients of supply disruption
  - Switch to an alternative option before the next prescription is due, considering the patients ability to use the device, clinical appropriateness and patient preference.

Alternative options include:

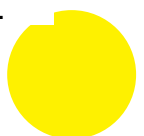
- Switch device to Tresiba® Penfill® 3ml cartridges for use with compatible reusable pen device (NovoPen® 6 or NovoPen Echo Plus®) – see additional advice below.
- Switch to an alternative insulin if the above option is not considered suitable– discuss with specialist diabetes team.
- Supplies of Tresiba® (insulin degludec) FlexTouch® 200 units/ml pre-filled pens are not able to support the increased demand but may be needed for exceptional cases.

Figure 2: Action Flowchart for patients prescribed Tresiba® 100 units/ml FlexTouch® Pen.



**Additional advice if switching to Tresiba® Penfill® 3ml cartridges:**

- Consider the patient’s manual dexterity and ability to use the new device correctly.
- Tresiba® Penfill® cartridges can be used with NovoPen 6® or NovoPen Echo Plus® reusable pen devices.
- The reusable pen devices may dial the dose in different dose unit increments compared to Tresiba® FlexTouch 100units/ml pens which dials in 1 unit increments:
  - NovoPen 6® dials in 1 unit increments
  - NovoPen Echo Plus® dials in ½ unit increments
- Supply of reusable pens can ONLY be obtained on prescription.
- Community pharmacies may not stock the reusable pen devices therefore allow time for this to be ordered into the pharmacy before switching the device.
- Free of charge supplies from NovoNordisk are no longer available.
- If there are concerns about the delay in obtaining reusable pen device via prescription for a patient, please contact specialist team for advice.
- Supply two reusable pens to ensure the patient has a spare device. Specialist teams may supply first reusable pen and request primary care clinicians to supply the spare pen via FP10 prescription.
- If patient already has reusable pen for a different insulin, ensure a different colour reusable pen device is supplied to reduce risk of administration error.
- Please ensure that compatible needles are being prescribed with NovoPen 6® or NovoPen Echo Plus® reusable pen devices:
  - Prescribe BD viva® or BD microfine®.
  - Tricare® needles and 4sure® needles are compatible with Novopen Echo® but cannot be used with Novopen 6 (not tested for compatibility).
- Advise patient to monitor glucose levels closely during this time.
- If additional support or clinical input required, please contact usual team (see below).



### Action for community pharmacies:

- Ensure patients switched from Tresiba® (insulin degludec) FlexTouch® 100 units/ml pre-filled pens to Tresiba® (insulin degludec) FlexTouch® 200 units/ml pre-filled pens are aware the pens dial up in 2 unit dose increments and no dose change is required (unless dose change has been recommended by specialist team due to hypo or hyperglycaemia).
- Ensure patients presenting with a new prescription for Tresiba® Penfill® cartridges have the recommended reusable pen device and compatible needles, can use the pen device correctly and has been counselled on the change in device by the prescriber.

### Additional resources:

- [NovoPen 6 user guide](#) and [training video](#)
- [NovoPen Echo user guide](#) and [training video](#)

### Contacts:

- NovoPen6® and NovoPen Echo Plus® (Novo Nordisk's) Medical Information: 0800 023 2573
- Initiating specialist diabetes teams: (if team not listed below contact via usual route or contact details on most recent clinic letter)

Adult Specialist Diabetes Teams	Email	Contact Number
Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital	gst-tr.diabetesandendocrine@nhs.net	020 7188 1916
King's College Hospital	kch-tr.diabetesnurses@nhs.net	02032999000 Ext 1739/1353
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	Lg.qediabetes@nhs.net	0208 836 5264
Queen Mary's Hospital	lg.sidcupdiabetes@nhs.net	020 3960 5580
Bexley & Greenwich community team	oxl-tr.diabetes@nhs.net	0208 319 7078
Bromley community Team	Bromh.bromleydiabetesservice@nhs.net	0300 330 5777 Ext 2 adults Ext 2 diabetes
Lewisham Hospital Team	LH.DiabetesNurseReferrals@nhs.net	02031926462
Lambeth community team	gst-tr.diabetes@nhs.net	02086557842
Lewisham community team	LG.communitydiabetes@nhs.net	02031926540
Southwark community team	gst-tr.southwark-diabetes@nhs.net	02030498863

Paediatric Specialist Diabetes Teams	Email	Contact Number
Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital	paediatricdiabetesteam@gstt.nhs.uk	02071884617
King's College Hospital	kch-tr.PaediatricDiabetesTeam@nhs.net	-
Lewisham Hospital	LH.PaediatricDiabetes@nhs.net	-
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	LG.ChildrensDiabetes@nhs.net	0208 836 5851

### References:

1. National Patient Safety Alert: [Potential for inappropriate dosing of insulin when switching insulin degludec \(Tresiba®\) products](#) 08/12/22
2. Department of Health and Social Care Medicines Supply Notification [MSN/2023/053 Tresiba \(insulin degludec\) FlexTouch 100units/ml solution for injection 3ml pre-filled pens](#) @ '24/05/2023
3. Summary of Product Characteristics: [Tresiba 100 units/mL Pre filled \(FlexTouch\)](#)
4. Summary of Product Characteristics: [Tresiba 100 units/mL Cartridge \(Penfill\)](#)
5. [NICE Guidance: Type 1 diabetes in adults \(insulin therapy\)](#)
6. Expert local opinion

Version 4.0, 18 December 2023

