

MEDICINES MANAGEMENT

World Antimicrobial Awareness Week 18th – 24th November

World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (WAAW) is an annual global campaign that aims to improve awareness and understanding of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and encourage best practice among the public, One Health stakeholders and policymakers. This year, the theme of WAAW is “Preventing Antimicrobial Resistance Together.”

Action:

Activities you could consider during the week include:

- Promoting the appropriate use of antibiotics to your patients by using the nationally developed resources available via the [UKHSA Resource Centre](#) (login required) and the Royal College of General Practitioners TARGET (Treat Antibiotics Responsibly, Guidance, Education, Tools) [toolkit](#).
- Becoming an [Antibiotic Guardian](#) by making a pledge.
- Taking part in the twitter storm on November 18th using the hashtag - #keepantibioticsworking. For the global twitter relay details and materials, [click here](#)
- Aligning with each of the daily UK WAAW themes, by registering for the AMR Programme at NHS England webinars using the link [World Antimicrobial Awareness Week – Daily Webinars | NHS England Events](#). The webinars will take place via MS Teams, each lasting between 45 and 60 minutes.

Respiratory collaboration project – Primary Care and QEH

A collaborative working project with Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) pharmacy team to enable primary care clinicians to attend a **joint virtual clinic with QEH respiratory specialist pharmacists** to review **asthma and COPD** patients. This advisory service will support PCNs in delivery of IIF respiratory and inhaler indicators.

Action:

For further information please see attachment 1 and 2 for the project PowerPoint and inhaler sustainability resources respectively.

Changes to vitamin B prescribing

Vitamin B compound strong tablets should no longer be used for the prevention of Wernicke’s Encephalopathy in alcoholism.

Action:

- It is to be used for refeeding syndrome and in chronic malabsorption but should not be coming out to primary care often for this. The formulary has now been amended to reflect this advice.
- For oral vitamin prevention of Wernicke’s Encephalopathy (WE) in alcoholism, prescribe oral thiamine 200mg to 300mg total daily dose alone.”

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Monthly Drug Tariff Watch

The Drug Tariff Watch is produced and updated monthly by Greenwich Medicine Optimisation team. It provides information on the previous months price concessions, changes in drug tariff prices over the last 3 months as well as current serious shortages.

Action:

- Serious Shortages: please consider the recommendations provided
- Price concession: Please contact your prescribing advisor for advice if stock has become unavailable, or items cannot be dispensed due to significant cost difference.
- Please see attachment 3 for further information

The Drug Tariff Watch should be used as reference only (stock availability can change).

Fenbid Forte (Ibuprofen gel 10%)

Fenbid Forte 10% has been discontinued

Action:

Please note that as Ibuprofen gel 10% is non-formulary, it should not be being prescribed in primary care. Advise patients to self-purchase OTC.

Generic Hypromellose Eye Drops 0.3%

Generic Hypromellose Eye Drops 0.3 has been deleted from Part VIIIA of the June 2022. Drug Tariff and equivalent brands are listed in the Appliances section (Part IXA). As a result, all existing prescriptions for hypromellose eye drops 0.3% as a medicine are now **non-EPS compliant** and so are unable to be sent electronically.

When hypromellose 0.3% is prescribed generically as an appliance this is not subject to NHS price controls and prescriptions may be filled with expensive products,

Action:

- Advise the patient to purchase a suitable product over the counter for mild/moderate cases, if clinically appropriate
- Alternatively, please ensure it is prescribed by brand as e.g Aapromel (with preservative) eye drops 0.3% or Evolve PF eye drops

PrescQIPP Clinical webinars

Prescribers and other practice pharmacists are encouraged to sign up to the monthly PrescQIPP upcoming webinars (1-2pm). (Registration required), at www.prescqipp.info/our-resources/clinical-masterclasses/

- **23rd November** - Epilepsies in children, young people and adults, Professors Helen Cross and Arjune Sen
- **13th December** - Antibiotic stewardship in dentistry and impact in Primary Care, Dr Wendy Thompson

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NICE updates

The following topic has been updated in October 2022

- **Osteoarthritis in over 16s: diagnosis and management** - NICE guideline [NG226] Published: 19 October 2022
This guideline covers the diagnosis, assessment and non-surgical management of osteoarthritis. It aims to improve management of osteoarthritis and the quality of life for people with osteoarthritis.

Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) resources-

www.sps.nhs.uk (registration required)

- **Swallowing difficulties** - advice on using medicines safely and effectively in patients with swallowing difficulties.
- **New addition: Herbal medicines: safety during pregnancy** - pregnant women often use herbal medicines as alternatives to conventional medicines and a review of the safety of commonly used herbal medicines is provided
- **Safety in breastfeeding** - access all SPS training and guidance to help decision making about the use of medicines in breastfeeding.
- **Safety in pregnancy** - access all SPS training and guidance to help decision making about the use of medicines in pregnancy.
- **Medicines monitoring** – access SPS summarised recommendations and guidance for medicines requiring monitoring.

Healthcare professionals in primary care can now get in touch with SPS using a single contact number (telephone 0300 7708564) and email address (asksps.nhs@sps.direct) to access Medicines Advice. For more information [click here](#).

Our generic inbox greenwich.pharmacy@selondonics.nhs.uk remains available for all other queries.

Drug Safety

Metolazone: preparations and safety considerations

In recent years, metolazone has only been available in the UK as an unlicensed (imported) product. A licensed formulation is now available (Xaqua® 5mg tablets). The SPC for Xaqua® 5mg tablets states that there is up to a two-fold difference in bioavailability compared to other metolazone preparations. A dose adjustment may be necessary if switching between metolazone preparations, and individualised titration based on the patient's response to and tolerability of metolazone is advised if switching from Xaqua® tablets to another metolazone product, or vice versa

Action:

- Ensure that the prescribing and supply of metolazone is product specific.
- Clear documentation of the approved medicinal product name at the point of prescribing and at all transfers of care may limit incorrect formulations inadvertently being chosen.
- An SPS resource regarding metolazone prescribing can be found [here](#)

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MHRA Drug Safety Week

The 7th annual #MedSafetyWeek social media campaign took place between the 7 to 13 November 2022 and focussed on the importance of reporting suspected adverse reactions to medicines and vaccines. The theme for 2022's campaign is "how patients and healthcare professionals make safety work". The Yellow Card scheme can be used to report a suspected defective or fake medicine, adverse reactions to herbal or homeopathic medicines and problems with medical devices, including software, apps and e-cigarettes.

Action:

- Support reporting suspected adverse drug reactions (side effects) to [the Yellow Card scheme](#) or via Yellow Card app – only a suspicion is needed to report a suspected reaction. Further guidance is available on [how to complete a Yellow Card report](#). More information can be obtained via the following [link](#)

SEL Integrated Medicines Optimisation Committee (IMOC)

NEW

- The cardiovascular sub-group of the SEL IMOC has developed guidance to support the [safe switching of patients on anticoagulants for atrial fibrillation to the direct oral anticoagulant \(DOAC\) edoxaban](#). A [DOAC practice review template](#) and [patient review template letter](#) are also available to support practices.
- Formulary inclusion of insulin degludec (Tresiba™) for the management of Type 1 diabetes for children and young people over 12 years old as **amber 2** (*initiation and first prescription from the specialist diabetes team*). Please refer to the [formulary recommendation](#) for further details, including criteria for use.
- Formulary inclusion of Bijuve™ (estradiol 1mg and micronised progesterone 100mg) oral capsules as **green** (initiation in primary care or secondary care) for hormone replacement therapy for oestrogen deficiency symptoms in postmenopausal women. Please refer to the [formulary recommendation](#) for further details, including criteria for use.
- Formulary inclusion of estrogen and progesterone therapy for pubertal induction in girls with primary or secondary ovarian insufficiency as **amber 2** (*specialist initiation followed by maintenance prescribing in primary care*). Please refer to the SEL Joint Medicines Formulary for further details on the [estrogen preparations](#) and [progesterone formulations](#) approved for this indication.

Contact Details

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