

MEDICINES MANAGEMENT – DIABETES MELLITUS

Glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1 RAs)

GLP-1 RA stocks are limited and varied. Supply issues are not expected to return to normal until at least **end of 2024**.

[National Patient Safety Alert Shortage](#) resources have been updated and available on the [IMOC webpage](#):

- [GLP-1 in T2DM shortage patient info leaflet- Mar 24](#)
- [GLP-1 in T2DM shortage support pack - March 2024](#)
- Updated [GLP1 Pathway for Adults with T2DM](#)
- The **only** GLP-1 RA available for **new** initiations in SEL is Rybelsus® (semaglutide) tablets.
- Byetta® (exenatide) 5micrograms/0.02ml and 10micrograms/0.04ml solution for injection 1.2ml pre-filled pens will be discontinued in March 2024
- Victoza® (liraglutide) is out of stock until end of 2024

Action:

1. Use the [Shortage Pack Resources](#) to identify priority patients.
2. Use attached EMIS searches to identify patients prescribed exenatide (Byetta®) and liraglutide (Victoza®) injections and switch to oral semaglutide (Rybelsus®) tablets or an alternative product if clinically appropriate.
3. Patients should not be switched between strengths of GLP-1 RA based solely on availability, or doses doubled.

Insulin Shortages

Product	Type of supply issue	Alternative product to consider
Fiasp® FlexTouch® (insulin aspart) 100units/ml soln for injection 3ml pre-filled pens	Shortage – from April 24 - January 25	Fiasp® Penfill® cartridges
Tresiba® (insulin degludec) FlexTouch 100units/ml soln for injection 3ml pre-filled pens	Shortage until Dec 24	Tresiba® 100units/ml Penfill® cartridges, or if not able to use cartridges, 200units/ml prefilled pens may be necessary*.
Levemir® InnoLet® (insulin detemir) 100units/ml soln for injection 3ml pre-filled disposable devices	Discontinued with remaining stock exhausted by the end of May 2024	Levemir® FlexPen® 100 units/ml pre-filled pens and Penfill® 100 units/ml cartridges remain available
Insulatard® InnoLet® (insulin isophane human) 100units/ml 3ml pre-filled disposable devices		Humulin® I KwikPen® (insulin isophane human) 100units/ml 3ml pre-filled pens remain available

Action:

- Do not initiate patients on affected insulins.
- SEL specialist diabetes teams will be contacting patients under their care prescribed to switch to an alternative option, depending on clinical and practical appropriateness and patient preference. Seek advice from specialist team on management if the above options are not suitable.
- Ensure that patients initiated on a new device are counselled on the change in device, provided with training, signposted to training videos, supplied appropriate delivery systems and closer monitoring of blood glucose levels.
- Ensure that for any patients who have been switched to Tresiba® FlexTouch® 200units/ml solution for injection 3ml pre-filled pens are made aware that Tresiba® FlexTouch® pen delivery devices dial up in unit increments rather than volume and no dose change is necessary.

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Continuation of Treatment Initiated Privately - Poster

[GMC Good Medical Practice](#) states that if requested by a private consultant to initiate or continue prescribing medications, and if the GP agrees with this advice, then this could be appropriate. However, if the GP does not feel competent to prescribe the requested medication, or they do not know if the medication best serves the patient's need, the GP should inform the private provider that the prescriptions should be provided by a specialist.

Action: A poster (see attachment) has been developed to for primary care for display poster in clinical rooms and other communication channels e.g. practice webpage.

Medicine Supply Notifications (MSN)

[Salbutamol 2.5mg/2.5ml nebuliser liquid unit dose vials](#)

MSN supersedes NatPSA (26 Feb) as supply position has improved. The 2.5mg/2.5ml nebulisers will be in limited supply from mid-Apr until late Jun 2024. The 5mg/2.5ml nebulisers remain available but cannot support increase in demand.

Action: Review appropriateness for home nebuliser use, and liaise with COPD team if necessary, determine if the patient has sufficient supplies of nebuliser liquid at home before issuing repeat prescriptions.

[Jext® 300micrograms/0.3ml \(adrenaline 1 in 1000\) solution for injection auto-injector pen](#)

These pens will be out of stock until 25 March 2024.

Action: EpiPen® 300micrograms/0.3ml (adrenaline 1 in 1000) auto-injector pens remain available and can support a full uplift in demand. Jext® 150micrograms/0.15ml (adrenaline 1 in 1000) pens also remain available.

[Midazolam \(Epistatus®\) 5mg/0.5ml oromucosal solution pre-filled oral syringes](#)

These pre-filled oral syringes are currently out of stock and the resupply date is to be confirmed.

Action: Prescribe midazolam 5mg/1ml oromucosal solution pre-filled oral syringes (Buccolam®) as alternative, stock remain available and can support increased demand.

National Institute of Health and Care Research (NIHR) - How to reduce antibiotic use in primary care

The NIHR held a webinar in January 2024 to share evidence from NIHR-funded research. The webinar covered:

- the safety of reducing antibiotic use in primary care
- antibiotic use for children with chest infections
- a digital intervention that can help reduce antibiotic prescribing in primary care.

Action: This [collection summarises the three studies presented at the webinar](#). It includes video clips from the speakers and incorporates quotes from the day.

New preparations

- Octasa® 1600mg modified-release tablets (mesalazine)
- Octasa® 1g suppositories (mesalazine)

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The following existing outputs have been updated and are now available via the IMOC website:

- The [shared care guidelines \(SCG\)](#) for the continuation of mycophenolate mofetil, Prograf™ (tacrolimus immediate release), Advagraf™ (tacrolimus modified release) and azathioprine for the prevention of organ rejection in adult liver transplant recipients.
- [Formulary recommendation 135](#): Dienogest for the treatment of endometriosis (**Amber 2** category)
- [SEL Decline of Prescribing letter template](#)

Restless Leg Syndrome

- [Restless Legs Syndrome -Treatment Pathway](#)
- [Restless Legs Syndrome - GP Fact Sheet](#)
- [Formulary recommendation 061](#): Clonazepam/zopiclone/zolpidem for the management of restless legs syndrome
- [Formulary recommendation 062](#): Specific opioids (codeine phosphate or oxycodone/ naloxone) for the management of restless legs syndrome

National Policy and Guideline Updates

Conditions for which over the counter items (OTC) should not be routinely prescribed in primary care

This is an updated [guidance](#), that provides recommendations for items available OTC that should not be prescribed in primary care because:

- there is limited evidence of clinical effectiveness for the item;
- the item would be prescribed for a condition that is self-limiting and will clear up on its own without the need for treatment;
- the item would be prescribed for a condition that is appropriate for self-care.

Valproate: Important new regulatory measures for oversight of prescribing to new patients and existing female patients

In addition to [further restrictions to valproate use](#) to reduce avoidable harm which were introduced by the MHRA, new safety and educational materials about [sudden unexplained death in epilepsy \(SUDEP\)](#) will be available for clinicians to support shared decision making.

National Measles Guidelines

Updated [national resources](#) are available on management of measles, including how to manage cases of suspected measles, what patient details to take, who to notify and assessing risk of disease spreading in close contact.

Clinical commissioning policy: prescribing of gender affirming hormones (masculinising or feminising hormones) as part of the children and young people's gender service

Gender affirming hormones are available as a routine commissioning treatment option for young people with continuing gender incongruence / gender dysphoria from around their 16th birthday subject to individuals meeting eligibility and readiness criteria set out in this document.

Contact Details

Meds Management: greenwich.pharmacy@selondonics.nhs.uk

Primary Care: Jan Matthews: jan.matthews@selondonics.nhs.uk

System Development: Jo Hare: joannehare@selondonics.nhs.uk

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The Monthly Drug Tariff Watch

DHSC and NHSE/I have now launched an online [Medicines Supply Tool](#), which provides up to date information about medicine supply issues. You will need to register on [SPS](#) to access this.

[SEL IMOC - Shortages](#) produces supporting information for primary care to manage significant medicines shortages.

The historical issues of [Drug Tariff Watch](#) are available here.

Polypharmacy Action Learning Sets (ALS)

The Polypharmacy ALS is an evidence-based learning model developed by Wessex Health Innovation Network in partnership with Health Education England to support healthcare professionals who undertake prescribing, medication reviews and de-prescribing on a regular basis to understand the complex issues surrounding stopping inappropriate medicines safely. The online interactive course is held over three half-days (9.30am – 12.15pm) over one month on Zoom. Multiple cohorts are being set up over the year ahead.

Action:

- [Register here to attend](#)
- [Register your interest in future action learning sets here](#)

PrescQIPP Bulletins

- [335: Care Home – Homely Remedies](#). Advice for GP and Care home staff to support setting up a homely remedies system in a care home.
- [340: Sustainability in medicines optimisation](#). Reducing the carbon footprint of medicines.

New and Updated NICE Guidelines

[Vitamin B12 deficiency in over 16s: diagnosis and management - guidance \(NG239\) New](#)

Covers recognising, diagnosing and managing vitamin B12 deficiency, including deficiency caused by autoimmune gastritis.

Interpreting total or active B12 test results

Results if testing total B12 concentrations	Results if testing active B12 concentrations	Likelihood of vitamin B12 deficiency
Less than 180 nanograms (133 pmol) per litre	Less than 25 pmol per litre	Confirmed vitamin B12 deficiency
Between 180 and 350 nanograms (133 and 258 pmol) per litre	Between 25 and 70 pmol per litre	Indeterminate test result – possible vitamin B12 deficiency
More than 350 nanograms (258 pmol) per litre	More than 70 pmol per litre	Test result suggests vitamin B12 deficiency is unlikely

BNF Updates

Significant changes

- [Bromocriptine](#): Updated to include safety information on fibrotic/serosal reactions, impulse control disorders, prevention/suppression of lactation.
- [Insulin degludec \(Tresiba®\)](#): Potential for inappropriate dosing of insulin when switching Tresiba products.
- [Liraglutide \(Saxenda®\)](#): Vigilance required due to potentially harmful falsified products.
- [Semaglutide \(Ozempic\)](#): Vigilance required due to potentially harmful falsified products.
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