

MEDICINES OPTIMISATION

Valproate safety – update to Greenwich Medicines Optimisation Workplan 2024/25

In January 2024 MHRA published further [guidance](#) stating valproate must not be started in new patients (male or female) younger than 55 years, unless two specialists independently consider and document that there is no other effective or tolerated treatment, or there are compelling reasons that the reproductive risks do not apply.

As per guidance from the MHRA and pan-collegiate guidance endorsed by the Royal College of GPs, GPs have responsibility for:

- identifying and recalling all patients taking valproate who may be of childbearing potential
- providing them with the [valproate patient guide](#)
- checking they have been reviewed by a specialist in the last year (e.g. an in-date [Annual Risk Acknowledgement Form for female patients](#))
- checking they have a Pregnancy Prevention Plan and are on highly effective contraception (refer to [MHRA aide-memoir table](#) for more information).
- ensuring patient records are coded appropriately

The Greenwich Medicines Optimisation Workplan 2024/25 has been amended to reflect this information.

Flu vaccination programme 2024 to 2025

Guidance for healthcare practitioners on the national influenza immunisation programme 2024-25 is now available [here](#).

The key changes to the flu vaccination programme cover the recommendations as to when the flu vaccine should be given and the change to the live attenuated influenza vaccine from a quadrivalent to a trivalent vaccine.

Action:

- Review and disseminate the guidance to all relevant healthcare professionals.

South East London (SEL) ICS Primary Care Antimicrobial Prescribing Guidelines on Eolas Medical®

The SEL Primary Care Antimicrobial Prescribing Guidelines is migrating from the MicroGuide® platform to a new platform called Eolas (*pronounced oh-luss*) Medical®.

The guidelines can be accessed via the Eolas Medical® app on phones and tablets, as well as through a desktop web browser.

In addition to hosting the SEL Primary Care Antimicrobial Prescribing Guidelines, Eolas Medical® offers a range of additional functionalities, including a knowledge base repository to other medical resources and guidelines such as the BNF, BNFC, NICE guidelines and other national guidance.

Action:

- See Attachment 1 for information on how to download the app and access the antimicrobial prescribing guidelines

Greenwich combined wound care formulary

The [Greenwich combined wound care formulary](#) has been updated to include the care homes prescription request form.

Action:

- All care home staff requesting wound care items should now use the [Greenwich care home Prescription Request form](#)

MEDICINES OPTIMISATION

Paediatric Proton-Pump Inhibitor (PPI) Prescribing Guideline for South East London

The [SEL paediatric PPI prescribing guideline](#) details when dispersible tablets and liquids should be prescribed.

Omeprazole liquid should only be prescribed if:

- <1 years old **without** an enteral feeding tube **and** dose <5mg
- <1 years old **with** an enteral feeding tube
- >1 years old **and** <10kg **with** an enteral feeding tube

Action

- Review all paediatric patients on liquid PPIs in line with guidance

Tracheostomy prescribing

Patients prescribed tracheostomy appliances should be reviewed to ensure they still require the requested quantities.

Action:

- GP practices to review requests from dispensing appliances contractors (DAC), ensuring appliances are not dispensed prior to receiving a prescription and querying duplicate requests with patients.

Hosting 4th year pharmacy students in general practice

There is an opportunity to support the next generation of pharmacists by hosting 4th year pharmacy students for their upcoming placements in General Practice.

Supervisors should be trained pharmacists, and placements involve a flexible workbook that can be tailored to your practice's needs.

Please see Attachment 2 for flyer and for further details email placements@seltraininghub.co.uk

Digital Community Pharmacy Projects

Enhance Patient Care with the NHS App

The NHS App allows patients to book and manage GP appointments, order repeat prescriptions, and view medical records securely. Additionally, a range of other services are available, including checking symptoms, getting advice, and registering for organ donation.

For more information, contact lrtiqa.altaf@selondonics.nhs.uk

Action:

- Community pharmacies to promote the NHS App with patients

Trialling Accurx web services in Community Pharmacy

Accurx is an easy-to-use platform where patients and healthcare professionals can communicate via text messaging and remote video consultation. In addition, community pharmacies can communicate with GP practices, sharing secure clinical information (e.g. blood pressure readings).

For further information or to trial Accurx web services in your pharmacy, contact Paulomi.Vyas@selondonics.nhs.uk

Digital survey of software platforms used in Community Pharmacy

A questionnaire has been designed to understand which digital platforms are in use across SEL community pharmacy. Please follow the link below to respond to the survey <https://forms.office.com/e/BqV2chVqEj>

MEDICINES OPTIMISATION

Government restrictions on use of puberty suppressing hormones (puberty blockers): information for primary care

NHS England have issued a letter to all GPs and other primary care team members on prescriptions for puberty suppressing hormones for children and young people aged under 18 years. Please see Attachment 3 for letter.

Extended government restrictions on use of puberty suppressing hormones (puberty blockers): information for prescribers and pharmacists / dispensing doctors

NHS England have issued a document on the temporary restrictions for puberty suppressing hormones that were issued in June 2024 and an extension to these restrictions until 26 November 2024.

Please see Attachment 4 for the document.

Medicines Supply Issues

Issuing medicines affected by supply shortages

Medicines that are affected by supply shortages should be considered for issuing on a separate FP10 prescription. This is to help prevent delays in patients receiving their medicines and ease of prescribing alternatives.

Neonatal and Paediatric Pharmacy Group (NPPG) Position Statement for shortage of Pancreatic Enzyme Replacement Therapy (PERT)

NPPG has published a [position statement on the Shortage of PERT in neonates and children](#). This has been written in response to National Patient Safety Alert.

The position statement aims to provide advice on alternative products, dosing equivalences, and prescribing guidance.

Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs)

If the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) decide there is a serious shortage of a specific medicine, then an SSP may be issued. The following SSPs have been issued for:

- [Cefalexin 500mg tablets](#) - 6 August to 27 September 2024
- [Ramipril 2.5mg tablets](#) - 6 August to 15 November 2024

Medicines Shortages: Medicine Supply Notification (MSN)

The contents of MSNs can be viewed on the [Medicines Supply Tool](#). To access the tool you will be required to register with the [SPS](#). MSNs have been issued for the following:

- Tier 3 MSN for Creon[®] Micro Pancreatin 60.12mg gastro-resistant granules
- Tier 3 MSN for methylphenidate prolonged release tablets
- Tier 2 MSN for naloxone (Nyxoid[®]) 1.8mg/0.1ml nasal spray
- Tier 2 MSN for Isosorbide mononitrate 60mg modified-release tablets and capsules
- Tier 2 MSN for norethisterone (Noriday[®]) 350microgram tablets
- Tier 2 MSN for naltrexone 50mg tablets
- Tier 2 MSN for cefalexin 500mg tablets
- Tier 2 MSN for ramipril 2.5mg tablets
- Tier 2 MSN for desmopressin (DDAVP[®]) 4 micrograms/1ml solution for injection ampoules

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

Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS)

Guidance

- [Treating acute hypokalaemia in adults](#)
- [Assessing suitability of medicines in a ketogenic diet](#)

MEDICINES OPTIMISATION

MHRA Drug Safety Update August 2024

[Valproate use in men: as a precaution, men and their partners should use effective contraception](#)

A retrospective observational study has indicated a possible association between valproate use by men around the time of conception and an increased risk of neurodevelopmental disorders in their children. Inform male patients who may father children of this possible increased risk and the recommendation to use effective contraception during valproate treatment and for at least 3 months after stopping valproate.

[Yellow Card Biobank: call to contribute to study of genetic links to side effects](#)

Support this initiative to explore whether there is a genetic basis of side effects associated with direct-acting oral anticoagulants (DOACs) and allopurinol.

[Letters and medicine recalls sent to healthcare professionals in July 2024](#)

A summary of recent letters and notifications sent to healthcare professionals about medicines and medical devices.

New and Updated NICE Guidelines

- [NICE guidance \(NH243\) Adrenal Insufficiency: Identification and management](#)
- [Technology Appraisal guidance \(TA995\) Relugolix for treating hormone-sensitive prostate cancer](#)
- [Technology Appraisal guidance \(TA996\) Linzagolix for treating moderate to severe symptoms of uterine fibroids](#)
- [NICE guidance \(NH242\) Diabetic retinopathy: management and monitoring](#)

BNF Update

Significant Changes:

- [Immunisation schedule](#) - updated guidance for immunisation against influenza
- [Influenza vaccine](#) - updated guidance for immunisation
- [Medical emergencies in the community](#) - updated guidance on the use of salbutamol in the management of acute asthma
- [Migraine](#) - updated guidance to include atogepant for migraine prophylaxis
- [Topical corticosteroids](#) - introduction of new labelling and a reminder of the possibility of severe side effects, including Topical Steroid Withdrawal Reactions

Dose changes:

- [Levomepromazine](#) [update to palliative care indications and dosing]
- [Midazolam](#) [update to palliative care indications and dosing]
- [Salbutamol](#) [update to dosing for asthma; prophylaxis of allergen-or-exercise-induced bronchospasm; other conditions associated with reversible airways obstruction (adults only); and exacerbation of reversible airways obstruction (children only)].

Contact Details

Medicines Optimisation: greenwich.pharmacy@selondonics.nhs.uk

Primary Care: Nicky Skeats: Nicky.Skeats@selondonics.nhs.uk

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

NEWSLETTER EXTENSION

SOUTH EAST LONDON INTEGRATED MEDICINES OPTIMISATION (SEL IMOC) UPDATE

Please see the [South East London Joint Medicines Formulary](#) for the relevant formulary updates and further information.

New guidelines/pathways

- Inclusion of Meflynate™ XL capsules in the [paediatric formulary](#) for the treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children 6 years and over. The [paediatric ADHD shared care guideline](#) has also been updated to reflect this inclusion.
- [Formulary inclusion](#) of Trimbow™ NEXThaler as **GREEN** for first line use in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), in line with the updated [SEL COPD inhaler pathway](#). Associated [Formulary Recommendation 084](#) has also been updated.
- A [SEL primary care prescribing guide for ocular lubricants for adults](#) has been developed to support the management of dry eye disease in primary care.
- [Formulary inclusion](#) of ivermectin 3mg tabs as a second line treatment option for scabies as **GREEN** for adults and children >15kg, after topical treatment in line with the updated [primary care dermatology guideline](#). This follows availability of a licensed oral generic.
- [Formulary inclusion](#) of Paravit-CF™ capsules and liquid for multivitamin supplementation as **AMBER 1** with use restricted to adults and children with cystic fibrosis (CF) only.
- The [SEL Medicines Optimisation in Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery guideline](#) has been developed.
- [Formulary inclusion](#) of Freestyle Libre 2 plus™ devices as **AMBER 2** for use in adults with Type 1 Diabetes
- A new [DOAC position statement](#) to reflect changes in the currently preferred DOACs in SEL
- CESEL primary care guide for depression and anxiety in adults can be accessed via this [webpage](#). The medicines related content has been approved by SEL IMOC and the [SEL Joint Medicines adult Formulary](#) has been updated to reflect the resulting changes
- [CESEL atrial fibrillation \(AF\) guide](#) has been developed
- [Formulary inclusion](#) of Nutrizym 22™ (pancreatin) capsules as **AMBER 1** to replace Pancrease® HL permanently (due to supply shortages) for the treatment of pancreatic endocrine insufficiency.
- [Formulary inclusion](#) of Treclin™ 1%/0.025% and Epiduo™ 0.3%/2.5% gel as **GREEN**
- [Formulary inclusion](#) of ospemifene as **AMBER 2** for moderate to severe symptomatic vulvar and vaginal atrophy in post-menopausal women.
- SEL has developed [Branded & Generic Medicines prescribing guidance](#)

Updated guidelines/pathways

- [Formulary recommendation 122](#) Rivaroxaban and apixaban for the treatment of left ventricular thrombus (LVT) in adults updated to reflect the re-categorisation from **RED** to **AMBER 2**.
- [Formulary recommendation 130](#) Hydrocortisone (Alkindi®) granules in capsules for opening 0.5mg, 1mg and 2mg for replacement therapy of adrenal insufficiency in infants and children (neonates – 5 years old) has been updated, including the removal of the 12 month time limit.

- [Formulary recommendation 105](#) Testosterone in topical gel formulation for use in women with decreased libido in the menopause (Tostran™ 2% gel and Testogel™ 40.5mg in 2.5 grams) has been updated following approval of the [SEL primary and secondary care menopause and hormone replacement therapy \(HRT\) guidelines](#). The [formulary entries](#) have been updated to reflect the re-categorisation from **AMBER 2** to **AMBER 1** in menopause.
- [Formulary recommendation 084](#) – Trelegy™ Ellipta™, Trimbow™ & Trimbow™ NEXThaler in COPD. The recommendation has been updated to reflect the re-categorisation of Trelegy™ and Trimbow™ from **AMBER 1** to **GREEN**, and inclusion of Trimbow™ NEXThaler as **GREEN**.
- The [paediatric proton pump inhibitor \(PPI\) prescribing pathway](#) has been reviewed and updated.
- Octenidine (Octenisan™ md) nasal gel has been re-categorised from **RED** to **AMBER 1**.
- [Morphine sulphate 500 micrograms/5ml oral liquid](#) has been re-categorised from **GREEN** to **RED** within the paediatric formulary to support safer prescribing.
- [Formulary recommendation 116](#) – Safinamide for the management of Parkinson's disease in adults has been updated with The 12-month time limit removed.
- The [SEL Dermatology guidelines for primary care](#) have been updated to reflect changes in the management of scabies and the inclusion of ivermectin 3mg tablets.
- To reflect the recommendations within the [new DOAC position statement](#), the following guidance has been reviewed and updated:
 - [DOAC Practice template for patient review](#)
 - [DOACs FAQ](#)
 - [DOACs in NVAF initiation and monitoring guidance](#)
- The [SEL Interface Prescribing Policy](#) has been updated
- Following the publication of NICE TA (924) – Tirzepatide for treating type 2 diabetes and updates to the national advice on managing the GLP-1 analogue shortages, the following diabetes resources, have been updated:
 - [GLP-1 analogue T2DM information sheet](#)
 - [GLP-1 T2DM pathway](#)
 - [Hyperglycaemia guideline for T2DM](#)
 - [Once daily basal insulin titration patient information leaflet](#)
 - [Sick day rules patient information leaflet](#)
 - [GLP-1 in T2DM shortage patient information leaflet](#)
 - [GLP-1 in T2DM shortage support pack](#)

The following dermatology resources and formulary entries have been reviewed and updated:

- [SEL Primary Care Dermatology Guidelines](#).
- [Formulary inclusion](#) of tacrolimus 0.1% and 0.03% ointment and pimecrolimus 1% cream as **AMBER 1**
- [Formulary recategorisation](#) of tacrolimus 0.1% and 0.03% ointment and pimecrolimus 1% cream from **AMBER 2** to **AMBER 1**
- [Formulary categorisation](#) of Epiduo™ 0.1%, 2.5% as **GREEN**
- [Formulary re-inclusion](#) Anthelios® SPF50+Sunscreen as **AMBER 1** and as the first line sunscreen option for protection from UV radiation in specific patient cohorts meeting the ACBS criteria.
- [Formulary categorisation](#) of Sunsense Ultra® and Uvistat® as **AMBER 1**, second line options for protection from UV radiation in specific patient cohorts meeting the ACBS criteria.