

MEDICINES OPTIMISATION

Ramadan Guidance Update

To support practices with advising people with diabetes who may be fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, please refer to the following guidance from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde: <https://rightdecisions.scot.nhs.uk/media/ibwd3aw3/290-diabetes-mellitus-during-ramadan-v6.pdf>

This guidance can be referred to in place of previous SEL guidance, which is under review.

Direct access to Primary Care Antimicrobial Guideline (Eolas)

The SEL Primary Care Antimicrobial Prescribing Guidelines, previously hosted on the MicroGuide® platform moved to the Eolas (*pronounced oh-luss*) Medical® platform in August 2024. The antimicrobial guidelines (on Eolas) is now accessible via the “Quick Links” section of SELnet (no login required). The SEL Primary Care Antimicrobial Prescribing Guidelines on Eolas Medical® remain accessible as an app on phones and tablets (iOS and Android), and through a desktop web browser.

Adult Oral Nutritional Supplements - Aymes product name changes

Aymes have recently changed the name of 3 of their products, and released 2 new products as listed below:

1. AYMES Actagain 2.0 (previously AYMES 2.0kcal)
2. AYMES Actagain 2.4 (previously AYMES ActaGain 2.4 Complete Maxi)
3. AYMES Actagain 2.4 DAILY (previously AYMES ActaGain 600)
4. AYMES Actagain 2.0 Fibre (new)
5. AYMES Actagain 1.5 Plant Powered (new)

We have been assured that the EMIS database has been updated with changes to the Aymes products, as part of the latest update release. However, practices are not seeing these reflected in local EMIS versions. The similar names of some products is likely to cause some confusion, and patients may be unaware of product name changes, resulting in prescription errors.

Recommendations for Practices:

1. Please ensure that your local EMIS has been updated to the latest version to ensure that product names are updated;
2. Please review product names on prescription requests carefully to ensure the correct product is being prescribed – in particular, look out for products with the word ‘daily’ which replaces the ‘600kcal’ supplement / cross-reference the above list;
3. Please inform patients of the above name changes when swapping products or at medication reviews.
4. If you are unsure which is the correct product, you can contact either the requesting dietitian, or the PSD team at: gst-tr.prescribingsupportdietitians@nhs.net.

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Overdoses in rough sleepers

There has been an increase in non-fatal heroin or opiate related overdoses involving rough sleepers.

Clinicians are reminded to take additional action to protect local vulnerable drug using populations, particularly rough sleepers, by reiterating harm reduction messages and ensuring appropriate provision of naloxone.

Speak and refer individuals who use drugs to the Greenwich specialist drug and alcohol treatment services. (Adults referred to Greenwich Via on 0300 303 4552. Young people (under 18) to be referred to YPSMS on 020 8921 6907).

Report any intelligence on increased drug- related risks to Greenwich Council - drug.alerts@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Medicines Safety

Overdose with over-the-counter colecalciferol (vitamin D3) drops

Several children were admitted to hospital in Manchester with significantly raised vitamin D3 levels due to an unintentional overdose of colecalciferol. They had been prescribed a food supplement of vitamin D3 instead of a licensed product containing higher levels of vitamin D3 than stated on the label. It is recommended that licensed medicinal products are prescribed and supplied by brand for the administration of treatment doses of vitamin D3.

Please refer to SEL guidance when prescribing vitamin D3 in [children](#) and [adults](#) for advice on dosing and formulation.

Prescribing and dispensing errors (Look alike-sound alike)

The names of some drugs can look and sound very similar and be easily confused. The packaging of different medications can also look very similar, risking mis-selection. Clinicians are advised to check when selecting medicines to be prescribed and dispensed such as reading aloud the medication, storing look alike-sound alike medicines separately and ensuring the medicine selected is appropriate for the patient’s condition

Actions:

- Review PrescQIPP [look-alike-sound-alike guidance](#)
- Continue to report medication errors

Risk from different strengths of oral liquids

Some oral liquids used are available in various strengths e.g. propranolol is available in four strengths: 5mg/5mL, 10mg/5mL, 40mg/5mL and 50mg/5mL. Different volumes of liquid are therefore required to deliver the same dose. If this is not communicated clearly to patients, there is a risk the wrong dose may be taken.

Advice for clinicians:

- Check both concentration and dose with the patient / carer
- Confirm in millilitres (mL) and milligrams (mg) with an oral syringe
- Counsel patients to be aware of different strengths: check the strength received and adjust volumes as needed

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Avoiding medication delays and omissions

Clinicians are reminded that medication delays or omissions can lead to hospital admissions and fatal outcomes.

Actions:

- Ensure patients are aware of the importance of taking their medication
- Inform prescribers if medicines are out of stock and alternatives where appropriate to prevent delay

Medicines Supply Issues

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:

- [Estradot® \(estradiol\) 100micrograms/24 hours transdermal patch](#) – 19 December 2024 to 4 April 2025
- [Estradot® \(estradiol\) 75micrograms/24 hours transdermal patch](#) – 19 December 2024 to 4 April 2025
- [Estradot® \(estradiol\) 50micrograms/24 hours transdermal patch](#) – 19 December 2024 – 4 April 2025
- [Cefalexin 125mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free](#) – 10 December 2024 to 2 May 2025
- [Creon 25000 gastro resistant capsules](#) where supplies are available, but the prescription is for more than 1 month's supply - 24 May 2024 to 23 May 2025
- [Creon® 1000 gastro resistant capsules](#) where supplies are available, but the prescription is for more than 1 month's supply - 24 May 2024 to 23 May 2025

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 2 MSN for Salbutamol (Salamol Easi-Breathe®) 100micrograms/dose breath actuated inhaler CFC free
- Tier 2 MSN for Desmopressin 10microgram/dose nasal spray
- Tier 2 MSN for Megestrol (Megace®) 160mg tablets
- Tier 2 MSN for Levofloxacin 250mg and 500mg tablets
- Tier 2 MSN for Apraclonidine (iopidine®) 5mg/ml (0.5%) eye drops

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

Supply of unlicensed Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) subcutaneous implants

The unlicensed HRT subcutaneous implants manufactured by Advanced Pharmaceutical Technology Inc. (APT) in the USA to treat menopause uses the UK importer / distributor SmartWay. These medicines are currently unlicensed and following an inspection report by the US Food and Drug Administration, SmartWay placed a voluntary hold on the supply, whilst MHRA conducted a regulatory review.

The MHRA review concluded that these products may be the only suitable treatment option for some patients, therefore, SmartWay will now supply the remaining imported stock of Estra® 25mg and 50mg pellets to existing patients only, with discussion with their healthcare professional. Existing stock in the UK should be sufficient for approximately 18 months, whilst alternative sources are sought.

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

MEDICINES OPTIMISATION

Community Pharmacy funded opportunity to work with local community groups and improve high blood pressure detection

Get involved to work with your local community groups and improve blood pressure detection in this **funded** project:

- Deliver community-led blood pressure testing
- Provide health education and promote self-management
- Strengthen partnerships between community organisations and primary care

A collaboration of South East London partners including Clinical Effectiveness South East London (CESEL) have designed a blood pressure (BP) screening interactive tool, available [here](#).

Pharmacies are invited to propose a project with their local community groups to help test and embed the BP screening tool. Further details, including the expression of interest form is available [here](#).

Please email [Elisabeth Morgans](#) or [Stephanie Atta](#) if you are interested in testing this tool or complete an [Expression of Interest](#) (EOI) form **by 11 April 2025**

Webinars

- **An Introduction to the new SEL COPD Guideline**
[Register here](#) for the webinar on **16 April 2025 7-8pm**. The webinar covers what is new in the SEL COPD guideline and how to utilise the guideline using patient case studies.
- **Biosimilar and key generic medicines – April 2025 update** on **9 April 2025 12.30-2pm**. Please see link [here](#) for further information and how to register.

PrescQIPP Updates

Bulletins

[Bulletin 362. Oxycodone](#) – This bulletin supports the review of oxycodone, such as safety, review, tapering and deprescribing.

[Bulletin 363. Formulary and shared care development](#) – To support medicine formularies and shared care guidelines

MHRA Drug Safety Update March 2025

- [Prolonged-release opioids: Removal of indication for relief of post-operative pain](#) – the indication for the treatment of post-operative pain has been removed from the licences of all prolonged release opioids due to the increased risk of persistent post-operative opioid use (PPOU) and opioid-induced ventilatory impairment (OIVI).
- [Letters and medicine recalls sent to healthcare professionals in February and March 2025](#)

New and Updated NICE Guidelines

- [NICE Technology Appraisal TA1045 - 12 SQ-HDM SLIT for treating allergic rhinitis and allergic asthma caused by house dust mites](#)

BNF Update

Significant changes

- [Andexanet alfa](#) - therapeutic use changed to reversal of anticoagulation
- [Idarucizumab](#) - therapeutic use changed to reversal of anticoagulation
- [Pneumococcal polysaccharide conjugate vaccine \(adsorbed\)](#): name change of Apexxnar® to Prevenar 20®.