

Medicines Optimisation news headlines

AUGUST 2013

1. Shingles vaccination programme

Vaccination against shingles for adults aged 70 and 79 years of age commences 1 September 2013. Q&A's for healthcare professionals:

[Link](#)

2. Oral retinoids: Pregnancy prevention-MHRA reminder of measures to minimise risk to patients

[Link](#)

3. Patient Group Direction (PGD) for the administration of rotavirus (Rotarix ®) oral vaccine for babies at two and three Months

Online training slides can be accessed at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rotavirus-training-slideset> If you have any questions about this programme please e-mail the Wessex Public Health Commissioning Team at england.wessexph@nhs.uk

4. Medicines Optimisation Team FAQ

Duraphat toothpaste - In line with Wessex LMC recommendations, this high fluoride toothpaste is not recommended for GP prescribing locally. It may be prescribed by NHS dentists in exceptional cases, in line with the Dental Practitioners Formulary (DPF).

5. MHRA warning about oral ketoconazole

Oral ketoconazole-containing medicines should no longer be used for fungal infections due to an increased risk of liver damage. Shampoos and creams are not affected by this decision.

[Link](#)

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6. Safety warnings from DPC safety subgroup

- **Buccolam and Epistatus**

Buccal (oromucosal) midazolam used to treat prolonged, acute, convulsive seizures in infants, toddlers, children and adolescents is available in TWO different strength liquid preparations. All professionals, patients and carers should be made aware that it is important to ensure that patients receive the same strength of liquid consistently. We therefore recommend that all prescriptions should state the brand required to avoid any confusion.

Buccolam® which is licensed contains midazolam hydrochloride 5mg/ml. It is available as four prefilled colour coded syringes which should be prescribed according to the child's age.

Epistatus® which is unlicensed for buccal administration contains midazolam maleate 10mg/ml and is available as a 5ml bottle.

- **Lithium formulations liquid & tablet are not of equal strength** – care when prescribing and dispensing

Solution: Lithium Citrate	Equivalent Tablet strength: Lithium Carbonate
Li-Liquid = Lithium Citrate Oral Solution: 509mg in 5ml. A 5ml dose is equivalent to	200mg
Priadel Liquid = Lithium Citrate sugar free: 520mg in 5ml. A 5ml dose is equivalent to	204mg

See BNF section 4.2.3

- **Recent drug-name confusion:** please be vigilant as life threatening errors may occur. Recent examples of medicine names that have been confused resulting in medication errors include:

Mercaptamine and mercaptopurine
Sulfadiazine and sulfasalazine
Risperidone and ropinirole
Zuclopenthixol decanoate and zuclopenthixol acetate

[Link](#)

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***Basingstoke, Southampton and Winchester
District Prescribing Committee (DPC)***

Recommendations of the meeting of 11 June 2013

Supported or limited support, e.g. specialist recommendation/initiation

- **Dapagliflozin- a new oral medication for the treatment of diabetes-** Local specialists are likely to suggest a niche use for this add-on therapy, rather than routine general use. This requires further confirmation at the August DPC meeting and/or following publication of NICE Guidance.
- **Wound Formulary Handbook, February 2013** - minor amendments were agreed around the use of metronidazole gels and Zetuvit E sterile dressings sizes.
- **New products for Actinic Keratosis (AK) - Ingenol gel (Picato®)** was supported for short-term use locally (2-3 days) as an option in the treatment of non-hyperkeratotic and non-hypertrophic AK. **5-aminolaevulinic acid (Ameluz®)** was supported for prescribing by specialists only (classified 'red'). In contrast, **Imiquimod cream 3.75% (Zyclara®)** was not supported, and a reminder that **Imiquimod cream 5% (Aldara®)** remains unsupported for local use in AK.
- **Fidaxomicin, new oral medication for use in Clostridium difficile infection** - The DPC supported this for third line niche use, on the advice of a specialist in microbiology in exceptional cases.
- **Teriparatide injection** - this was supported for niche (unlicensed) use in atypical fracture healing in small numbers of exceptional cases. The medication should be prescribed by a specialist for all indications (i.e. remains 'red')
- **Naltrexone-** A shared care guideline for alcohol misuse was approved in principle. There is however a need to clarify future funding of FP10 costs incurred now that the budget for alcohol misuse services sits with public health teams in the Local Authorities.
- **Low dose Methotrexate-** abridged shared care guidelines were approved with minor amendments. There remains a strong emphasis on the use of the 2.5mg tablets in preference to higher strengths, on safety grounds. 10mg tablets may be required only in exceptional cases.
- **Oxazepam-** added to UHS and Southampton City Joint Formulary for second line use in older patients with liver impairment undergoing alcohol detoxification therapy.

Not Supported currently

- **Linaclotide, new medication in IBS-** not supported currently due to the lack of good quality evidence of clinical benefit.
- **Ranolazine in CHD-** remains unsupported for routine use locally.

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Information / Reminders / Updates/ Safety Messages / NICE

- **Osteoporosis Guidelines and Denosumab shared care guidelines** -Updates approved, including new safety advice on both strontium and denosumab. A reduction in strontium use will be likely as a result of this, especially in much older people. Two bisphosphonates, alendronate and then risedronate, should be tried before considering moving to other options such as denosumab. GPs may initiate denosumab without referral (if confident to do so) or on following telephone advice from a specialist. Re-referral remains an option of course, and denosumab remains officially 'amber' for the time being. Denosumab safety monitoring is currently being added to some local Near Patient Testing LES's that exist, to support shared care.

**Summarised on behalf of the District Prescribing Committee
Julia Bowey (Southampton City CCG) 09.07.13**

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