

# Medicines Optimisation news headlines

## MARCH 2014

### 1. IVF prescribing guidance

GPs are sometimes approached by patients who are undergoing IVF privately and requested to prescribe the required medicines.

This issue was discussed by the CCG Medicines Optimisation Clinical Steering Group whose view is that it is clinically inappropriate for GPs to assume prescribing responsibility for IVF treatment in primary care because of the specialist nature of the procedure and the medicines involved.

The Group's advice to GPs is that the medicines required should be seen as an integral part of the overall procedure and that prescribing responsibility and associated monitoring requirements should remain with the specialist. This applies whether the procedure is being funded by the NHS or privately.

### 2. St John's wort and interaction with hormonal contraceptives

A reminder from the MHRA that St John's wort interacts with hormonal contraceptives. The interaction reduces the effectiveness of these contraceptives and increases the risk of unplanned pregnancy. This applies to all hormonal contraceptives except intrauterine devices, for which there are currently no data.

<http://www.mhra.gov.uk/Safetyinformation/DrugSafetyUpdate/CON392869>

### 3. Antibiotic guidelines being updated

These guidelines (available as a booklet and an app) are currently being updated. If any users have comments to feed into the update process, then please let Catherine Mclean know by the end of April – [catherine.mclean2@nhs.net](mailto:catherine.mclean2@nhs.net)

If you haven't yet downloaded the app onto your tablet or smartphone please search Hampshire antibiotics and look for the 'capsule men' logo.

### 4. New addition to the Consilient oral contraceptive range

There has been a good uptake of the Consilient range of oral contraceptives locally and the company has now introduced Lucette (ethinylestradiol 30 micrograms/ drospirenone 3mg) which contains the same active ingredients as the Yasmin brand. Lucette costs £9.35 (3x21 tablets) whilst Yasmin costs £14.70. Based on current prescribing there is a potential annual saving in West Hampshire of £46,000 if all Yasmin prescribing was prescribed as Lucette.

## 5. Quantities of medicines supplied on discharge from hospital

The general principle is that patients should be discharged with enough medicines to prevent an urgent request to their GP.

The exact quantity will vary and takes into account the amount of medication the patient already has (hospitals top up patients' own supplies with original packs usually containing a month's supply), and the nature of the condition. The hospital will usually supply the full course of treatment for short term conditions (for example antibiotics or analgesics).

## 6. Valsartan shortages

Several suppliers are experiencing problems with the supply of valsartan capsules and tablets. Information on dose equivalence with other A2RAs is available at:

<http://www.medicinesresources.nhs.uk/en/Communities/NHS/SPS-E-and-SE-England/Medicines-Information/Discontinuation-Supply-Shortage-Memos/Shortage-of-Valsartan/>

## 7. Changes to medicines management team

There have been quite a number of changes to the team recently including the retirement of Sally Aldridge and Maggie Collin and the impending departure of Simon Cooper (who is taking up the role of Head of Prescribing Support at Portsmouth CCG).

In an attempt to maximise the resources available to directly support practices it has been decided to rationalise the locality lead role within the team. This means that Liz Corteville is now the Locality Lead Pharmacist for Eastleigh North, Test Valley South, Eastleigh Southern Parishes and Totton and Waterside localities, and Ginny Ward is the Locality Lead Pharmacist for the Winchester, Andover and West New Forest localities.

The team also has a number of pharmacist vacancies which are being actively recruited to. Contact details for all the team are available on the CCG website at:

[http://www.westhampshireccg.nhs.uk/documents/cat\\_view/84-medicines/85-medicines-management-team-contact-details](http://www.westhampshireccg.nhs.uk/documents/cat_view/84-medicines/85-medicines-management-team-contact-details)

## 8. Denosumab PLUM service

Practice Managers have been sent details of the new PLUM (Prescribe Locally Undertake Management) service for denosumab. Please note that the scheme only applies to the denosumab preparation (Prolia) indicated for osteoporosis. The service specification sets out the requirements and is complemented by the shared care guideline for denosumab:

[http://www.westhampshireccg.nhs.uk/documents/doc\\_view/576-denosumab-shared-care-guideline-gp-summary-december-2013](http://www.westhampshireccg.nhs.uk/documents/doc_view/576-denosumab-shared-care-guideline-gp-summary-december-2013)

We would urge practices to sign up to this service which will enable patients to receive their denosumab injections in primary care.

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