

Welcome to the **COVID-19** K&M Medicines Optimisation (MO) news update.

Articles in this week's edition include:

- Remote Prescribing Guidance
- Community Pharmacy update
- Care Homes Update
- Palliative Care Update
- PrescQIPP Access
- Epimax Name Change
- Shortages Update

Access a list of Medical Specialties/ Professional Body advice with direct links to their respective COVID-19 published guidance [here](#)

Please send all medicines queries relating to COVID-19: wkccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net

NHS England Guidance on Remote Prescribing

NHS England has published specific guidance on the remote prescribing of medication in health and justice (HJ) sites as a result of virtual/remote consultations with patients. The guidance states that prescribers should be aware of the processes for prescribing responsibly remotely and also advises providers to have written procedures underpinning how remote prescribing is undertaken. Processes have been described separately for controlled drugs (CDs) and Non-CDs. Access the full guidance [\(here\)](#)

Community Pharmacy Update

Many pharmacies are currently operating within restricted hours to allow them time to recover, clean and ensure that they can process prescriptions in a safe and timely manner. Most pharmacies are also following the **amended hours** below as requested by **NHS England**; however, these times may vary locally and some pharmacies may be open different times to this.

- 10am-12pm and 2pm-4pm
- 10am-12pm and 2pm-6pm

Kent & Medway Community Pharmacy Closure Notice:

- Boots Pharmacy, Bluewater Shopping Centre, DA9 9SJ (closed from 14th April 2020)

Care Homes - Changing from Medicines Dispensed in Monitored Dosage Systems (MDS) to Original Packs (OP)

Due to the extra workload, community pharmacies may no longer be dispensing medicines into MDS for care homes. There is no clear evidence that the use of MDS improves the safety of administration of medicines or reduces errors. Guidance has been made to community pharmacy and care homes where a change to using original packs is to be made:



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Any change to the way medication is supplied by a pharmacy to a care home should not affect the process of requesting medication or the issuing of repeat prescriptions from practices.

If there are any concerns regarding how medication is being supplied to a care home please email WKCCG.Medman@nhs.net. Further local care home covid 19 resources can be found on the referral support tool: <http://ashford.referralsupport.co.uk/referral/care-home-resources-covid-19/>

Palliative Care Update Locally Enhanced Service Update

The updated list of community pharmacies across Kent and Medway CCG commissioned to stock limited supplies of end of life drugs will be circulated to all prescribers. Any queries regarding the service should be sent to WKCCG.Medman@nhs.net.

Registration to Gain Access to PrescQIPP Website

Healthcare professionals (including; pharmacists, GPs and nurses) across Kent & Medway are encouraged to register to the PrescQIPP website if they have not already done so. PrescQIPP is an NHS funded, not-for-profit organisation, which supports quality and optimised prescribing for patients. Registration is free and allows access to a wide range of resources including:

- **Bulletins and Briefings:** with clinical evidence, information and guidance about a range of treatments and conditions
- **Webkits:** with practical tools and materials such as patient information and letters, pathways and audits
- **Data:** to help practices benchmark their activity and identify where they can make the biggest difference
- **Webinars:** to support learning on a variety of relevant topics

Website link ([here](#))

Epimax - Name Change

There have been recent changes to the Epimax product range and these changes have affected EMIS much faster than anticipated resulting in the original product names being deleted from the system, despite each maintaining a dual listing on the drug tariff until February 2021.

The update affects the three products listed below. The manufacture has confirmed that the products remain unchanged:

- EPIMAX® Original Cream (previously Epimax Cream)
- EPIMAX® ExCetra Cream (previously ExCetra Cream)
- EPIMAX® Isomol Gel (previously Isomol Gel)

Please see product statement [here](#) for further information.

Shortages Update

Clenil 100mcg Inhaler*	<p>The manufacturer has confirmed enough Clenil 100mcg inhalers have been released into the supply chain throughout April and similar supplies are expected in May. This is substantially more than they would normally supply, and should be enough to meet demand.</p> <p>Some areas may still be experiencing shortages due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Pharmacy quotas, meaning they can only order a few at a time▪ Supply issues to the smaller independents maybe challenging as larger pharmacy chains have been given priority▪ Delays in delivery, which is affecting all sectors of retail
Soprobe 100mcg and 200mcg Inhalers*	<p>The manufacturer is experiencing unprecedented demand. Their next batch of 100mcg and 200mcg inhalers will be released at the end of April.</p>
Metformin SR [Sukarto] 500mg Tablets	<p>The wholesalers are experiencing shortages due to increased demands and staff shortages. The manufacturer has confirmed that they will be sending extra stock which should be available W/C 27/04/20.</p>

***Clinicians can help to improve the supply chain by ensuring that the prescribed quantities of each inhaler type do not exceed 28 day treatment each time.**