

Date: 29/10/2020

Welcome to the **Kent & Medway Medicines Optimisation (MO)** news update.

Articles in this edition include:

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- **MHRA Guidance – Warfarin and other anticoagulants – monitoring patients during the COVID-19 pandemic**
- **Linacotide for use in primary care in Kent and Medway**
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SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE

Priadel® Update



In August, Essential Pharma made the decision to discontinue Priadel® tablets from April 2021. Since then and following an investigation by the Competition and Markets Authority, Essential Pharma have now informed the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) of its decision to reverse the discontinuation of Priadel® 200mg and 400mg tablets from the UK market with immediate effect, whilst facilitating pricing discussions. As such the discontinuation notice issued by the DHSC earlier this year has been withdrawn.

In light of this, there is no longer a need to switch patients who are stabilised on Priadel® tablets to an alternative lithium carbonate preparation until further notice. Essential Pharma has confirmed supplies of Priadel® 200mg and 400mg tablets are sufficient to meet current UK demand and is working to ensure further stocks are available to maintain supply after April 2021. Although Priadel® remains on the market, the DHSC cannot confirm a discontinuation will not take place at some point in future, so there is ongoing proactive work between the CCG and KMPT to ensure we are prepared should a discontinuation occur in the future.

Whilst Priadel® 200mg and 400mg tablets remain available, Essential Pharma are aware that ordering quotas have been exceeded earlier than expected, resulting in limited supplies. They have however, provided reassurances that if any hospital, community pharmacy or dispensary is in need of urgent stock of Camcolit® or Priadel® tablets they can be obtained through their distributor, Movianto (tel. 01234 248 500 / email: Orders.UK@movianto.com).

MHRA Guidance – Warfarin and other anticoagulants – monitoring patients during the COVID-19 pandemic

The MHRA recently issued guidance on monitoring patients taking warfarin and other anticoagulants during the COVID-19 pandemic. Healthcare professionals, in particular providers of INR monitoring services and community pharmacists should be aware of the guidance which highlights the following issues:

- Supratherapeutic anticoagulation has been observed during the pandemic.
- Advice for healthcare professionals regarding monitoring of warfarin and other anticoagulants.
- Reminder about the potential for interactions between oral anticoagulants (DOACs and vitamin K antagonists -VKAs) and other medicines
- Advice to be given to patients attending for INR tests or who are collecting prescriptions for DOACs or VKAs.

The full MHRA guidance is available ([here](#)) .

Linacotide has been approved for use in primary care in Kent and Medway

Linacotide may be considered for use in adults with moderate to severe Irritable Bowel Syndrome with Constipation (IBS-C) who fulfil both of the following criteria:

1. They have not responded adequately to or cannot tolerate all other suitable treatment options including optimal or maximum tolerated doses of laxatives from different classes.
2. They have had constipation for at least 12 months.

Patients must have a scheduled review after 4 weeks of initiating treatment and linacotide should be discontinued where symptoms have not improved.

Linacotide should form part of a multifaceted approach to management of IBS that emphasises the importance of self-help, general lifestyle, physical activity and diet.

Attached to this newsletter is the NICE IBS pathway, highlighting linacotide's place in therapy and to support appropriate prescribing.

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COVID-19 Updates: Changes from Newsletter Issues 1-9

During the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic back in March 2020, a vast amount of information was being published and was shared via this newsletter; the following information has been updated or is worth reiterating as the country prepares for a probable rise in COVID-19 cases.

NICE Rapid Guidelines Update

New or updated guidance for the month of October 2020: This month there is one COVID-19 rapid guideline that impacts upon primary care.

The COVID-19 rapid guideline: managing symptoms (including at the end of life) in community [guideline](#) has been updated. It aims to provide recommendations for managing COVID-19 symptoms for patients in the community, including at the end of life. The update adds a link to the [MHRA's advice on patients taking warfarin or other anticoagulants during the COVID-19 pandemic](#), which includes reports of supratherapeutic anticoagulation with warfarin.

Action: Clinicians should be aware of this month's new guidance and implement any necessary changes to practice.

Reminder of MHRA Drug Safety Update from 21st May 2020 "Valproate Pregnancy Prevention Programme: temporary advice for management during coronavirus (COVID-19)"

This update refers to the guidance issued on 6th May 2020 and advises specialists that annual reviews should not be delayed due to the pandemic. Please refer to the alert ([here](#)).

The update says that guidance will be updated once these temporary recommendations are no longer considered necessary. There has been no update to date (21.10.2020)

Provision of Vitamin B12 Injection During COVID-19

The British Society of Haematology (BSH) guidance on vitamin B12 replacement during the COVID-19 pandemic can be found ([here](#)) under COVID-19 updates -general haematology. Please access the BSH site to ensure that you have the most up to date guidance.

The Specialist Pharmacy Service website also summarises the BSH advice on this issue ([here](#))

NHS Volunteer Responders

The NHS Volunteer Responders Programme remains active and all previously shielded and/or otherwise vulnerable patients can access this support by calling 0808 196 3646. Please pass this number on to your patients who could benefit from this support.

Referrals for volunteer support can also be made by GPs, social prescribing link workers, practice nurses, community pharmacists, hospital discharge teams, NHS 111 and local authorities; for people who are at risk, vulnerable or have been advised to self-isolate. Referrals should be made via the NHS Volunteer Responders referrers' portal available at <https://www.goodsamapp.org/NHSreferral>.

Further details on the NHS Volunteer Responders Programme can be found [here](#).

Reporting Controlled Drugs (CD) Incidents and Concerns (Non-Designated Bodies)

Healthcare professionals have a statutory duty to report all complaints, concerns or untoward incidents involving controlled drugs to the Controlled Drugs Accountable Officer.

All non-designated bodies e.g. GP practices, Community Pharmacies, drug and alcohol services are reminded that all CD incidents or concerns should now be reported directly onto the online CD reporting tool www.cdreporting.co.uk in a timely manner.

The regular Medicines Supply, Shortages and Alerts update is attached as a separate document to accompany this newsletter.

Please send all medicines queries relating to the articles written to: kmccg.wkmedman@nhs.net

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Medway and Swale Local ICP Update

ScriptSwitch (Medway Practices)/ Optimise RX (Swale Practices)

We aim to make ScriptSwitch/Optimise RX as user friendly and relevant as possible. The medicines optimisation team regularly monitor, review and update the profile and we welcome any feedback for rejected switches. We encourage you to use the feedback function to alert us to any issues that may need addressing.

If you have any queries or experience any issues with ScriptSwitch please contact the Customer Services team on 02476 214700 or email support@scriptswitch.com. For the Optimise RX team dial 01392 440111 or email at contact@fdbhealth.com.

Communication Regarding Kent and Medway Preferred Branded Generics November 2020 Reminder

Notification for All Local Pharmacies

Each area of Kent will take a slightly different approach to implement this change due to work on their previous priorities. Medway and Swale are actively reviewing and switching patients. The current list can be found below as listed previously in newsletter 14 – 26/08/2020 - If you have any questions please get in contact with us. medwayswale.meds@nhs.net

Brand / Generic	K&M Preferred Branded Generic
Ascorbic Acid Tabs	Ascorb Tabs
Cyanocobalamin 50mcg Tabs (NEW)	CyanocoMinn Tabs
Dexamfetamine Tabs	Amfexa Tabs
Isosorbide Mononitrate MR	Monomil XL Tabs
Lidocaine plasters	Ralvo Plasters
Macrogol/Movicol Sachets	Cosmocol or Laxido
Mesalazine (Asacol) MR Tab	Octasa MR Tabs
Methylphenidate (Concerta) XL Tabs	Xaggitin XL Tabs
Metformin MR Tabs	Sukkarto MR Tabs
Oxycodone Liquid	Shortec 5mg/5ml Oral Sol
Procyclidine	Kemadrine Tabs
Rivastigmine	Alzest Patches
Tiotropium Inhaler	Braltus Inhaler
Tolterodine MR	Neditol XL Tabs
Tramadol MR Tabs	Marol MR Tabs
Venlafaxine XL	Vencarm XL

Palliative Care Charts

All palliative care charts can be found on DXS.

In response to the management of Covid patients, the 'Covid-19 Response Prescription Chart' was developed by the Kent & Medway End of Life Care Group. This is for the management of Covid patients only and does not replace the Medway and Swale PALLIATIVE CARE Community Prescription Chart (V8)

We have a number of community pharmacies that have been commissioned to stock end of life medication. Please see below for a list of all the pharmacies within Medway & Swale.

If you have any questions please get in contact with us. medwayswale.meds@nhs.net

Community Pharmacy	Contact number
Sheppey Hospital Pharmacy	01795 875541
Boots Sittingbourne	01795 472229
Medway Pharmacy	01634 575 805
Morrisons Walderslade	01634 684964
Sturdee Avenue	01634 851616
Ryders – Paydens	01634 842838
Chatham Paydens	01634 404142

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Useful Contacts

Primary Care Medicines Queries - Medwayswale.meds@nhs.net

Patient Complaints – kmccg.complaints@nhs.net

Controlled Drugs – england.southeastcdao@nhs.net

Community Pharmacy Issues - England.southeastcommunitypharmacy@nhs.net

Medway Foundation Trust Medicines Queries - medwayft.medsqueries@nhs.net