

Kent and Medway Medicines Optimisation Team June 22

Round up from June 22 News updates

Alerts

- MHRA - Class 4 Medicines Defect Information: Orifarm UK Ltd, Loprazolam 1mg Tablets, EL (22)A/25 [\(here\)](#)

Articles

- [The Carbon Footprint of Inhalers](#)
- [Kent and Medway Position Statement and Risk Mitigation Principles for Anticoagulant prescribing](#)

The carbon footprint of inhalers

The NHS aims to be the worlds' first net carbon zero health service and the propellants in metered dose inhalers (MDI) are responsible for 3% of the total carbon footprint of the NHS.

In Kent and Medway

- 780,000 salbutamol inhalers are dispensed per year.
- Approximately 1.2 million metered dose inhalers in total are dispensed per year.
- The carbon footprint of a Ventolin® inhaler is 28kg CO2 emissions, whereas a dry powder inhaler (DPI) is around 0.5kg CO2 emissions!

If all patients using Salbutamol MDI were switched to a DPI, we could save 21 million kg of CO2 emissions per year in Kent and Medway alone which is the equivalent of >21,000 return plane trips to New York!!

Actions for practices

- Speak to your patients regarding the carbon footprint of metered dose inhalers and consider switching them to a DPI at their COPD or asthma annual review.
 - Consider switching any patient using a salbutamol inhaler to a more carbon friendly version.
- **Switching to a DPI such as Ventolin Accuhaler® or Easyhaler Salbutamol® will save over 27kg CO2e per inhaler!**
- A DPI is preferable but even **switching from Ventolin® to Salamol® or Airomir® will save 18kg CO2e per inhaler!**
- Encourage patients to **return their empty inhalers to the community pharmacy**. Although there are currently no official recycling inhaler schemes operable in Kent and Medway, disposing of inhalers at the pharmacy means the inhalers will be incinerated. **Landfill disposal is harmful to the environment**. The release of remaining propellant can account for up to 25% of the life-cycle CO2 emissions of an inhaler. As well as the gases released, the plastic is generally not recycled which further adds to the carbon footprint.
- Counsel patients with asthma on the overuse of salbutamol inhalers. Not only does overusing salbutamol impact on cardiovascular health, but data in Kent and Medway shows that those **patients using 6 or more salbutamol inhalers a year directly relates to an increase in hospital admissions for asthma**. This is often because patients feel instant relief with salbutamol, and often don't see the necessity for life saving inhaled corticosteroids.
- Spread the message that asthma management is changing- salbutamol will no longer be a regular feature of management. Patient must use their ICS as prescribed, and there will be a drive for more patients to use MART (maintenance and reliever) therapy.

Thank you for your support. Together we can help the NHS reach carbon net zero by 2040!

If you would like further information on this subject, please visit the following or contact:

Kmccg.medicinesoptimisation@nhs.net

[Maintenance and reliever therapy \(MART\) | Asthma + Lung UK https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/high-quality-and-low-carbon-asthma-care/](https://www.greenerpractice.co.uk/high-quality-and-low-carbon-asthma-care/)

https://www.pcrs-uk.org/sites/pcrs-uk.org/files/NatRevAsthmaDeathsPIW_Final.pdf

Kent and Medway Position Statement and Risk Mitigation Principles for Anticoagulant prescribing

The Kent and Medway Clinical Cabinet has approved a position statement/risk mitigation principles document for anticoagulant prescribing to support clinicians when considering options for treating patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation (AF). All relevant hospital clinicians, primary care clinicians (or 3rd party organisations working on their behalf) are advised to follow the guidance set out in the document.

The document (embedded below) includes recommendations on the first line DOAC option for treatment of AF in Kent and Medway and broad risk mitigation principles to be followed when considering treatment changes e.g. to meet [requirements of the PCN DES around atrial fibrillation](#)

In addition, GP practices and PCNs who employ the services of 3rd party organisations for AF (and other) therapy reviews are strongly advised to follow the Kent and Medway policy on such external support. Links below

<https://www.medwayswaleformulary.co.uk/media/1456/jpc-anticoagulant-position-statement-risk-mitigation-v3.pdf>

<https://www.medwayswaleformulary.co.uk/media/1463/kmccg-position-statement-for-gp-practices-considering-accepting-support-provided-by-the-pharmaceutical-industry-via-megstherapy.pdf>