

Medicines Optimisation Newsletter

[October 2023] (Issue No. 51)



- [Update October 2023: Paediatric Asthma and Nebulisers](#)
- [Best Practice Guidance \(BPG\) for Care Homes](#)
- [Substance Misuse - Naloxone](#)
- [The Role of Inclisiran in Lipid Management](#)
- [Recommendations on the national supply disruption to ADHD medication](#)
- [Valproate containing products – October 2023 Drug Tariff update](#)
- [Pharmacists Epilepsy Education Group \(PEEG\)](#)
- [Antimicrobial Prescribing and Stewardship \(APS\) Competency Framework](#)
- [Serious Shortage Protocols for Clarithromycin](#)
- [MHRA Drug Safety Update – September 2023](#)
- [Shortages Summary](#)
- [NICE News – October 2023](#)

Kent and Medway ICB Updates

Update October 2023: Paediatric Asthma and Nebulisers

The MHRA guidance in 2022 prompted the following communication with clinicians earlier this year. Since these comms we have seen a slight reduction in the prescribing of nebulised bronchodilators (April- June 2022 59 items, April-June 2023 49 items), but with the winter season approaching there are still a number of children at risk.

It is not advised for a child with asthma to have a home nebuliser. There is a danger that they may stay at home, and try to manage symptoms, when they should not delay in attending A&E, for treatment of the underlying cause of their poor control.

One of the key recommendations of the National Review of Asthma Deaths 2014, states “where loss of control is identified, immediate action is required, including escalation of responsibility, treatment change and arrangements for follow-up.”

As soon as a person with Asthma is poorly controlled enough to potentially need a nebuliser they should call 999 for specialist life-saving treatment. Personal Asthma Action Plans advise that if these people are struggling to breathe, they can use 10 puffs of a Salbutamol inhaler via a spacer, each puff at 30 second intervals, and to call for an ambulance.

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We would advise that if an Asthma patient asks for Salbutamol nebulisers, because they have bought a nebuliser, the above advice is reinforced and nebulisers not prescribed.

Best Practice Guidance (BPG) for Care Homes

This is a reminder that the Integrated Care Team has developed several Medicines Management Best Practice Guidance (BPG) for use within care homes across Kent and Medway. The Best Practice Guidance aims to support care home staff to deliver safe and effective medicines management to residents within care homes.

These are available on the EK, MS formularies, Medway Council Portal, DGS, and WK Doris websites.

If you require any help or support or have any questions, please email the following address:

KMCCG.ICMOPharmacyteam@nhs.net

Links for Best Practice Guidance (BPG)

East Kent: [Care home resources \(eastkentformulary.nhs.uk\)](http://eastkentformulary.nhs.uk)

DGS: <https://www.dgsdvhformulary.nhs.uk/kent-and-medway-guidance/miscellaneous/care-homes-best-practice-guidance/>

DGS: available on DORIS too

MS: [Care Home Best Practice Guidance \(medwayswaleformulary.co.uk\)](http://medwayswaleformulary.co.uk)

Medway council: <https://www.careportal.medway.gov.uk/Article/111170>

West Kent: [Care Home Best Practice Guidance \(formularywkccgmtw.co.uk\)](http://formularywkccgmtw.co.uk)

Substance Misuse - Naloxone

Dear Partner Information Network (PIN)

This is to thank you for your **continued vigilance and support** in helping to keep people safe and prevent drug deaths.

The national and local threat of adulterated opiates is still high. There have been reported near fatal overdoses and deaths from heroin with contaminated substances in neighbouring districts. Most street heroin contains some adulterants, however newer threats are severe. These threats continue to come from **nitazenes** and **fentanyl**.

[News: December 2021 – WHO: World Health Organization recommends 3 NPS for scheduling \(unodc.org\)](#)

Nationally we are being asked to keep vigilant and **please find information below on naloxone** – which is the counter measure to overdose from heroin.

Thanks to our Substance Misuse Treatment Providers: Forward Trust in East Kent and CGL in West Kent there are trained members of staff that are willing to discuss naloxone with anyone that needs further information. Drop-in and ask to speak to a duty worker or call the hubs.

[Alcohol and drug support - Kent County Council](#)

Our Substance Misuse Treatment Service Providers recommend a **double dose of naloxone** to save lives.

Where to get naloxone: We know many of the PIN know this info – this email is to remind and emphasise.

- Attending a **Forward Trust / CGL** hub – all workers are able to dispense Naloxone.

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- Attending needle exchanges provided by certain participating **pharmacies** [contact Forward Trust (East Kent) or CGL (West) if needed.
- Online via exchangesupplies.org/nspdirect
- **How will they know how to use it?**
 - You will get a brief training from the service provider to enable you to use it.
 - Naloxone is free at point of delivery.

Thank you for your continued vigilance and support to help save lives,

Jessica Mookherjee

Lead Public Health Consultant for Substance Misuse, Mental Health, Suicide Prevention and Well Being across Kent and East Kent ICS/ICP/HCB/PCNs

The Role of Inclisiran in Lipid Management

NHS England have released a briefing note outlining the benefits of Inclisiran in Lipid Management and the use of it in Primary Care.

We would like to remind colleagues about the [Inclisiran position statement from Kent and Medway ICB](#), which supports its initiation and use in primary care. We are pleased to learn that there has been noticeable prescribing of Inclisiran in primary care following the publication of this position statement.

The attached document below covers the benefits and safety of Inclisiran, some key points made by NHSE are outlined below:

- Inclisiran, delivered as part of a [lipid management pathway](#), has the potential to deliver significant population health gain. Achieving this requires delivery at scale in primary care; deployment in secondary care alone will not deliver the reach and, therefore, the level of impact that is needed to improve the health of at-risk patients.
- Inclisiran is a NICE-recommended injectable lipid lowering therapy that addresses a current gap in the range of treatment options available for people with cardiovascular disease. [[NICE TA733](#)]
- There is a potential for Inclisiran to lead to better adherence in the management of hypercholesterolaemia, with minimal burden on the healthcare system.
- Important to note all new medicines that come to market have, by default, limited information from clinical trials. This means enhanced surveillance is put in place through the Black Triangle (▼) reporting process, including Inclisiran.
- If Black Triangle medicines were only available in secondary care, this would significantly limit the number of patients that could benefit from them. The risk of not prescribing, i.e., of a patient not being able to access a medicine, needs to be considered against the risk of an adverse response.
- The new data from ORION-8, presented at European Society of Cardiology (ESC) Congress 2023 on August 28, 2023, and shortly due for publication, continues to support the consistent long-term efficacy, safety profile, and tolerability of Inclisiran.

Briefing Note: The role of inclisiran in lipid management [issue-51-inclisiran-briefing-note.pdf](#)
(medwayswaleformulary.co.uk)

National Updates

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Recommendations on the national supply disruption to ADHD medication

On 27 September a safety critical and complex [National Patient Safety Alert](#) was issued warning of anticipated shortages over the coming months for the following attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) medicines:

Methylphenidate:

- Equasym XL[®] 10mg, 20mg and 30mg capsules
- Xaggitin XL[®] 18mg and 36mg prolonged-release tablets
- Concerta XL[®] 54mg prolonged-release tablets
- Xenidate XL[®] 27mg prolonged-release tablets

Lisdexamfetamine:

- Elvanse[®] 20mg, 30mg, 40mg, 50mg, 60mg and 70mg capsules
- Elvanse[®] Adult 30mg, 50mg, and 70mg capsules

Guanfacine:

- Intuniv[®] 1mg, 2mg, 3mg and 4mg prolonged-release tablets

There is also a current shortage of certain [atomoxetine capsules and oral](#) solution.

Please use the information in the attached documents below about how to manage the current and anticipated disruption.

[issue-51-adhd-update-251023-v10-kam.pdf \(medwayswaleformulary.co.uk\)](#)

[issue-51-adhd-faq.pdf \(medwayswaleformulary.co.uk\)](#)

To check stock availability a [medicines supply tool](#) is provided by DHSC & CMU with a designated '[Prescribing available medicines to treat ADHD](#)' page which lists current availability of medicines used to treat ADHD.

If it is helpful for patients, there is a non-clinical helpline for information: 01634 335095 option 3 then option 3, ADHD medicine shortages.

Valproate containing products – October 2023 Drug Tariff update

As per the [October 2023 Drug Tariff](#) please be aware that The Human Medicines (Amendment Relating to Original Pack Dispensing) Regulations 2023 mandating **whole pack dispensing of semisodium valproate, sodium valproate, valproic acid** will come into effect on 11 October 2023.

This means that where the quantity ordered by the prescriber does not coincide with that of an original pack and the drug is semisodium valproate, sodium valproate or valproic acid the contractor shall supply in the special container or containers the quantity nearest to that ordered and endorse the prescription form with the number and size of those containers. Part II [Clause 10B](#) of the October 2023 Drug Tariff has now been updated accordingly.

For further guidance on the full pack dispensing of valproate-containing medicines please see the following link. [Full pack dispensing of valproate-containing medicines - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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Pharmacists Epilepsy Education Group (PEEG)

On the 9th November 12:30-14:00 a webinar will be hosted by The Pharmacists Epilepsy Education Group. The webinar is suitable for Pharmacists from a range of backgrounds and has been developed to help those keen to move into this field by offering a platform for Pharmacists to learn from others and share experiences. For more information and to book your free place please see the following [link](#).

The Medicines Optimisation Team are also looking for primary care representatives to form the new Neurology Medicines Working Group. If this is also something you'd be keen to be involved with please contact the team email at kmicb.medicinesoptimisation@nhs.net.

Antimicrobial Prescribing and Stewardship (APS) Competency Framework

The UKHSA have recently shared a new [Antimicrobial Prescribing and Stewardship \(APS\) Competency Framework](#) with the aim of improving the quality of antimicrobial treatment and stewardship and reducing the risks of inadequate, inappropriate, and adverse effects of antimicrobial treatment. This will improve the safety and quality of patient care and make a significant contribution to the reduction in the emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

The APS competency framework can be used by both medical and non-medical prescribers in any care setting to support the development of their prescribing practice in relation to prescribing antimicrobials and embodying stewardship practices.

To understand their level of competence, prescribers should undertake an honest assessment of their current level of knowledge and skills and their ability to apply them in practice. This can be achieved through seeking the contribution and support of others and reviewing the APS competency framework. This framework contains descriptors relating to necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes for prescribers across 6 different domains:

1. Person-centred care
2. Infection prevention and control
3. Antimicrobial resistance and antimicrobials
4. Prescribing antimicrobials (diagnosis and use of antimicrobial agents)
5. Antimicrobial stewardship principles
6. Monitoring, learning, and interprofessional practice

After a realistic assessment of knowledge, skills, and competence, learning needs may be identified and how these can be met. It is recommended that as learning and development continues, prescribers should revisit the APS competency framework regularly and continue self-assessment to monitor progress. For more information please see the following [link](#).

Serious Shortage Protocols for Clarithromycin

Please be aware that as a result of ongoing supply issues, the current Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) in place for Clarithromycin 125mg/5ml oral suspension and Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension (SSPs 053 and 054) which were due to end in September, have now been extended. The new date for SSPs 053 and 054 is Friday 17 November. Please see the following [link](#) for details.

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MHRA Drug Safety Update – September 2023

The latest MHRA Drug Safety Updates can be accessed at [Drug Safety Update - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/drug-safety-update). This includes links to alerts, recalls and safety information and to the monthly Drug Safety Update PDF newsletter.

The September 2023 Drug Safety Update includes:

[Statins: very infrequent reports of myasthenia gravis - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/drug-safety-update)

Globally, there has been a very small number of reports of new-onset or aggravation of pre-existing myasthenia gravis with atorvastatin, pravastatin, lovastatin, fluvastatin, simvastatin, rosuvastatin and pitavastatin (single-ingredient and fixed-dose combination products). The MHRA recommend advising patients taking statins to be alert to new symptoms for myasthenia gravis, or worsening symptoms of pre-existing myasthenia gravis, and to seek medical advice if these occur.

Suggested Actions for GP Practices:

- Please see the MHRA advice for healthcare professionals and for healthcare professionals to give to patients.
- Identify patients with pre-existing myasthenia gravis and advise them to be alert to aggravation of symptoms while taking a statin.
- Consider providing the MHRA advice for healthcare professionals to give to patients, to patients on Statins.
- Inform all newly initiated patients as per MHRA advice.

[Fluoroquinolone antibiotics: suicidal thoughts and behaviour - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/drug-safety-update)

Healthcare professionals prescribing fluoroquinolone antibiotics (ciprofloxacin, delafloxacin, levofloxacin, moxifloxacin, ofloxacin) are reminded to be alert to the risk of psychiatric reactions, including depression and psychotic reactions, which may potentially lead to thoughts of suicide or suicide attempts. Healthcare professionals are also reminded to advise patients to be alert to these risks. Please follow the link to the MHRA advice in the title above.

[Letters and medicine recalls sent to healthcare professionals in August 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/drug-safety-update)

Please follow the link in the titles above for more information and resources.

The MHRA Central Alerting System alerts can be accessed at <https://www.cas.mhra.gov.uk/Home.aspx>

Shortages Summary

Please find the medicines shortages update (up until 13th October 2023) attached. Practices are encouraged to register for access to the SPS website <https://www.sps.nhs.uk/> and access the full medicines supply tool directly in real time.

[shortages-summary-oct-23.pdf \(medwayswaleformulary.co.uk\)](https://www.medwayswaleformulary.co.uk/shortages-summary-oct-23.pdf)

NICE News – October 2023

Please find the NICE News for October 2023 attached.

[recent-nice-publications-october-2023.pdf \(medwayswaleformulary.co.uk\)](https://www.medwayswaleformulary.co.uk/recent-nice-publications-october-2023.pdf)

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