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SUNSCREEN PRESCRIBING ^{1,2}

At this time of year, practices may receive requests for sunscreen preparations. Unless there is an underlying medical reason why such a product is necessary, the Medicines Management Team does not recommend prescribing of sunscreens on the NHS.

Sunscreens can be prescribed for the following conditions:

- Photodermatoses, e.g. vitiligo and as a result of radiotherapy
- Genetic disorders
- Chronic or recurrent herpes simplex labialis
- Previous history of malignant melanoma
- Concomitant photosensitising therapy e.g. amiodarone

Action

- Sunscreens should only be prescribed for patients with an underlying medical reason.
- Preparations with an SPF less than 30 should not normally be prescribed.
- The BNF lists sunscreens as “borderline substances” and prescriptions should be endorsed “ACBS”.

Products that are prescribable (if appropriate)

- Anthelios[®] XL SPF 50+ Melt-in cream
- Sensense Ultra[®] SPF 50+
- Uvistat[®] cream SPF 30
- Uvistat[®] cream SPF 50
- Uvistat[®] lipscreen SPF 50

DISCONTINUATION OF METFORMIN SACHETS ⁴

Metformin sachets have been discontinued due to manufacturing issues. There are large differences in price between available alternatives and patients currently receiving metformin oral powder sachets should be reviewed to determine if a liquid formulation is still clinically appropriate.

The following points should be considered when deciding on an alternate formulation:

- 1) Reassess the patient’s ability to take solid formulations (e.g. has dysphagia improved?)
- 2) Those able to swallow tablets should be changed to a solid dose form (if it is thought appropriate and in consultation with the patient). Some generic brands are now available as oval-shaped tablets to ease swallowing.
- 3) If a liquid formulation remains clinically indicated, the licensed 500mg/5mL concentration should be used. This liquid product is very expensive, so should be reserved for those patients with genuine swallowing difficulties. Long term need for the liquid formulation should be reviewed regularly at medication reviews.

Metformin Preparation	Annual cost of 1500mg / day
Metformin IR tablets 500mg	£33.93
Metformin MR tablets 750mg	£83.20
Metformin liquid 500mg / 5mL	£2,551.35
<i>Discontinued:</i> Metformin sachets 500mg	£119.76

ATRIAL FIBRILLATION NICE PATIENT DECISION AID

Alongside the updated clinical guideline on atrial fibrillation, NICE have published a patient decision aid (PDA) so that patients can be involved in discussions and make informed decisions about their treatment and care. The PDA summarises information on the things people with atrial fibrillation most often want to think about and discuss with their healthcare team when deciding on which anticoagulant treatment option to take, so that a person making this decision can weigh up the possible advantages and disadvantages of the different treatment options. Details can be found on the NICE website or via this link:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/resource/CG180/html/p/cg180-atrial-fibrillation-update-patient-decision-aid?id=dwx7qi7ghcmzwlq6xtbxx6puru>





CD LEGISLATION CHANGES ³

There have been some recent changes regarding the legal classification of tramadol, zaleplon, zopiclone and lisdexamfetamine. These medicines should now be treated as follows:

	Lisdexamfetamine	Tramadol	Zaleplon and zopiclone
Controlled as	Class B	Class C	Class C
Designation	Schedule 2 (CD POM)	Schedule 3 (CD No Reg POM)	Schedule 4 (Part 1)
Safe custody	Yes	No	No
CD prescription requirements	Yes	Yes	No

Further information on the CD changes is available on the Medicines Governance website:

<http://www.medicinesgovernance.hscni.net/primary-care/controlled-drugs/guidance/>



DEMECLOCYCLINE SHORTAGE

There is currently a supply problem with demeclocycline in the UK. In the interim, unlicensed demeclocycline is available from specialist importing companies, e.g. IDIS. Community pharmacies may order this directly from specialist importing companies. Please note this takes one week to arrive from placing an order.

RELOCATION OF REGIONAL MEDICINES INFORMATION

The Regional Medicines and Poisons Information Service has relocated to Knockbracken Health Care Park with subsequent changes to their contact details. New contact details are as follows:
Telephone: 028 9504 0558 Email: nirdic.nirdic@belfasttrust.hscni.net



MANAGED ENTRY DECISIONS

The following medicines were considered in June as part of the Northern Ireland Managed Entry process.

For details of the outcomes please refer to the Managed Entry section of the Northern Ireland Formulary website: <http://niformulary.hscni.net/ManagedEntry/MEDecisions/Pages/default.aspx>

Primary and Secondary Care

- Budesonide gastro-resistant granules (Budenofalk[®])
- Fluticasone furoate / vilanterol (Relvar Ellipta[®])
- Lubiprostone (Amitiza[®])
- Prasugrel (Efient[®])

Secondary Care

- Avanafil (Spedra[®])
- Defibrotide (Defitelio[®])
- Ipilimumab (Yervoy[®])
- Natalizumab (Tysabri[®])
- Paclitaxel, albumin-bound (Abraxane[®])

NEW NICE GUIDANCE

NICE Technology Appraisal 304: Total hip replacement and resurfacing arthroplasty for end-stage arthritis of the hip (review of technology appraisal guidance 2 and 44) <http://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/TA304>

This newsletter has been produced for GPs and Pharmacists by the Regional Pharmacy and Medicines Management Team. If you have any queries or require further information on the contents of this newsletter, please contact one of the Medicines Management pharmacists in your local HSCB office.

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2. BSO. Drug Tariff, July 2014. <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2034.htm>
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4. UKMi. Q&A 294.3 What are the therapeutic options for patients unable to take solid oral dosage forms? July 2013. <https://www.evidence.nhs.uk>

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