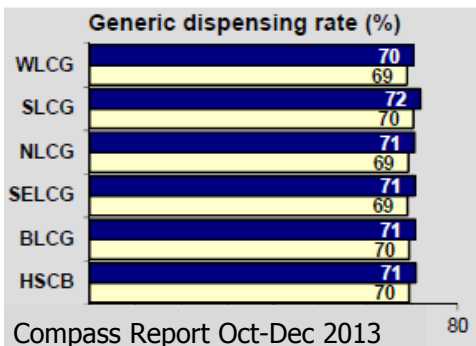


April 2014

Regional Pharmacy & Medicines Management

GENERIC PRESCRIBING

In Northern Ireland



Focus on Ebixa® loss of patent

Generic memantine tablets became available in February 2014. Switching of all remaining branded Ebixa® tablets to generic memantine tablets would result in efficiency savings in excess of £100k annually across Northern Ireland.

Action for Prescribers

Please consider switching all branded Ebixa® tablets to the generic memantine tablets.

Well done to prescribers for continuing to contribute to the increasing generic rate across Northern Ireland.

The list of medicines that the HSCB recommends are **not** prescribed generically, can be found at <http://primarycare.hscni.net/2632.htm> or http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/medicinesmanagement/Prescribing%20Guidance/index.html#P-1_0

Figure 1: These Missed Generics account for in excess of £1.8 million annually across NI

(refer to Compass Page 3 for practice-specific list)

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Nexium® tablets | → | Esomeprazole tablets |
| Xalatan® 2.5ml Eye drops | → | Latanoprost 50mcg/ml eye drops |
| Singulair® tabs | → | Montelukast tabs |
| Arimidex® tablet | → | Anastrozole tablets |
| Losec® capsules | → | Omeprazole capsules |
| Plavix® tablets | → | Clopidogrel tablets |
| Aricept® tablets | → | Donepezil tablets |
| Bondronat® tablets | → | Ibandronic acid tablets |
| Bonviva® f/c tablets | → | Ibandronic acid tablets |
| Lipitor® tablets | → | Atorvastatin tablets |
| Actonel Once a Week® 35mg | → | Risedronate 35mg tablet |
| Seroquel® tablet | → | Quetiapine tablet |
| Xalacom® 2.5ml eye drops | → | Latanoprost/Timolol 50mcg/5ml eye drops |
| Aprovel® tablets | → | Irbesartan tablets |
| Arava® tablets | → | Leflunomide tablets |
| Fosamax Once Weekly® 70mg tablets | → | Alendronic Acid 70mg tablets |

Figure 2: Patent Expiries in 2014

| Brand | Generic | Generic Expected |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Ebixa® ➤ | Memantine ➤ | Feb 14 |
| Cipralextm® ➤ | Escitalopram ➤ | May 14 |
| Almogran® ➤ | Almotriptan ➤ | Dec 14 |

Focus on Xalatan® switch

Background

Latanoprost eye drops became available generically during 2013. Even so, this drug is still often prescribed as the branded product, costing the NHS an additional **£180,000** annually.

Examination of the SPCs of generic latanoprost shows that the formulation of these products is identical or very similar to that of the original formulation of Xalatan®.

Storage Requirements

In 2013 the Xalatan® brand was re-formulated to allow storage at room temperature, although the shelf life was reduced from 3 years to 2 years. Generic formulations must be stored in the fridge until opened but may be stored at room temperature during the four weeks in which the bottle is in use.

Action for Prescribers

Please consider switching all branded Xalatan® to the generic latanoprost eye drops.

Prescribers are reminded to look at page 3 of their practice's Compass report each quarter to see if there are any brands that could be switched to the generic equivalent. Switch support materials can be accessed on the primary care intranet under "Pharmacy and Medicines Management, Clinical Resources, Generics". Practices should highlight to their MMAs any particular difficulties associated with implementing these switches to see if a solution can be found.

Reminders

- **DHSSPS Policy — Generic medicines should be prescribed in preference to branded products in all appropriate circumstances** irrespective of whether a generic medicine is currently available. This will ensure full utilisation of generic medicines when branded medicines come 'off-patent'.
- Practices should **ensure generic medicines are prescribed in preference to branded products** in all appropriate circumstances.
- **Generic Prescribing remains the single most effective way to generate savings** for the Health Service.
- Practices are encouraged to search for all brands listed in this newsletter and ensure that these products are switched to generic even if a generic product is not yet available, so savings can be made as soon as the generic price drops.
- It is important to ensure that patients are made aware of any proposed changes to their medication — support materials are available on the primary care intranet.
- Community pharmacists should be made aware of any planned generic switches to allow for stock adjustment and to ensure that patients are counselled about the change at dispensing.

REFERENCES

1. Compass Report Oct-Dec 2013
2. UKMI: Drug Patents which will expire in 2013 & 2014?, 25 March 2013. <http://www.ukmi.nhs.uk/>
3. Generic Latanoprost Prescribing, Royal College of Ophthalmologists, 30th May 2013
4. UKMI Patent Database. <http://www.ukmi.nhs.uk/>

This newsletter has been produced for GPs & community pharmacists by the Regional Pharmacy and Medicines Management Team.

If you have any queries or require further information on the content of this newsletter, please contact one of the Medicines Management pharmacists in your local HSCB office.

Eastern Area Office: 028 9055 3784

Northern Area Office: 028 2531 1049

Southern Area Office: 028 3741 4622

Western Area Office: 028 7186 0086

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