



GENERIC PRESCRIBING

In Northern Ireland

The Facts

- Generic medicines usually cost less than their branded equivalents.
- Use of generic medicines helps the HSC to treat more patients for the same money.
- Routine generic prescribing enables savings to be realised as soon as a generic is available.

DHSSPS Policy

- **Generic medicines should be prescribed in preference to branded products** in all appropriate circumstances irrespective of whether a generic medicines is currently available. This will ensure full utilisation of generic medicines when branded medicines come 'off-patent'.

KEY POINTS

- Generic Prescribing remains the single most effective way to generate savings for the Health Service.
- Practices should ensure generic medicines are prescribed in preference to branded products in all appropriate circumstances.
- **Up to £3.4m per year could be saved** through targeted generic prescribing in NI.

Table 1. Top 5 Generic Switches by Cost for Northern Ireland.

Arimidex [®]	➤	Anastrozole	➤	£ 471,176
Mirapexin [®]	➤	Pramipexole	➤	£ 214,296
Actonel [®]	➤	Risedronate	➤	£ 203,548
Plavix [®]	➤	Clopidogrel	➤	£ 194,368
Losec [®]	➤	Omeprazole	➤	<u>£ 140,420</u>
Total			£	1,223,808

Table 2. Top 10 Most Effective Generic Switches Per Prescription for Northern Ireland.

		Average Saving Per Rx		
Casodex [®]	➤	Bicalutamide	➤	£ 278.36
Mirapexin [®]	➤	Pramipexole	➤	£ 174.93
Requip [®]	➤	Ropinirole	➤	£ 132.13
Diflucan [®]	➤	Fluconazole	➤	£ 87.77
Cabaser [®]	➤	Cabergoline	➤	£ 86.77
Risperdal [®]	➤	Risperidone	➤	£ 83.15
Imigran [®]	➤	Sumatriptan	➤	£ 77.56
Zofran [®]	➤	Ondansetron	➤	£ 68.02
Zocor [®]	➤	Simvastatin	➤	£ 58.95
Zovirax [®]	➤	Aciclovir	➤	£ 56.81

Let your PC give you a helping hand

Some simple changes to the computer system can have dramatic effects on increasing the use of generic drugs and act as reminders

- Revise your formulary and change branded drugs to their generic equivalent.
- Change drug dose defaults to suggest using the generic equivalent. E.g. change the default to "Please use Generic XXXXX instead".
- Set up a synonym so preferred generic is 1st choice. E.g. add the synonym "Diflu" so when it is typed, Fluconazole is presented as first choice.



Find all patients getting branded medicines in one easy step - the APOLLO Generics Query

The Apollo 'Generic Prescribing' query searches your clinical system for branded drugs issued between two dates and then outputs the data into an EXCEL spreadsheet. This is an easy way to see all branded drugs prescribed without having to do individual searches for different drugs. It is recommended that practices search for branded drugs issued in the last 2 months and the resulting spreadsheet can be used to:



CHAPT	SECT	ID	DRUG	QUANTITY	BNF
92	2	6	7093	Gastrocote	112 2.6.2
93	2	6	3711	Gaviscon Advance	56 2.6.2
94	2	6	1354	Gaviscon Infant	56 2.6.2
95	2	6	1445	Gentisone Hc	56 2.6.2
96	2	6	7960	Glandosane (Lemon Flavour)	56 2.6.2
97	2	6	2352	Glucagen Hypokit	28 2.6.2
98	2	6	2352	Glucogel	28 2.6.1
99	2	6	2352	Glucophage	56 2.6.1
100	2	6	3650	Glutafin Gluten-Free	56 2.6.1
101	2	6	1568	Glutafin Select Gluten-Free	56 2.6.1
102	2	6	2602	Gyno-Daktarin	28 2.6.1
103	2	6	2266	Half Inderal La	112 2.6.3
104	2	6	1114	Havrix Monodose	56 2.6.1
105	2	8	5895	Hepataryx	10 2.8.1
106	2	12	246	Icaps	56 2.12
107	2	12	2567	Imdur	56 2.12
108	2	12	2602	Imigran	56 2.12
	2	12	2602	Infacol	28 2.12
	2	12	3960	Juvela Gluten Free	28 2.12
	2	12	3960	Juvela Gluten-Free	28 2.12
	2	12	5133	Bezaliip-Mono	56 2.12

- see where potential new switches can be made
- check generic switches which have already been made (to ensure they remain in place).

Instructions on how to run the Apollo query, set the time periods required, and update the query from the on-line repository, are all detailed in the help files that can be found [HERE](#) on the HSC Primary Care intranet site.

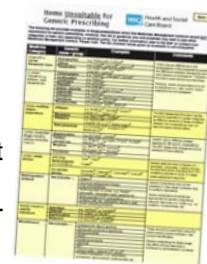
Generic Exceptions - Drugs that should be prescribed by brand name.

The list of medicines which the Medicines Management Advisors would NOT recommend for generic prescribing, can be found [HERE](#).

There has been feedback that certain medicines have been inappropriately prescribed generically and your attention is drawn to the following areas where it is important to maintain product consistency (and where the HSC

therefore recommend brand prescribing). These include:

- Anticonvulsants for treatment of epilepsy
- Immunosuppressants in transplant patients
- Oral contraceptives and multi-ingredient creams/liquids.
- HSCB Product Standardisation choices for preferred branded products.



Steps to Successful Generic Prescribing

Some simple steps to increase generic prescribing within your practice.

Further information and resource materials can be obtained from your Prescribing Support Team

2. Make an Action Plan

- Decide on areas for action & set some simple goals
- Plan what changes will achieve your goals

3. Communicate the Plan:

- Brief all staff
- Explain everyone's role in the process
- Explain how changes will be reviewed / monitored
- Liaise with community pharmacist(s)

4. Implement the plan

- Put up posters
- Provide information leaflets /letters
- Switch agreed drugs on patient records
- Use drug dose defaults to suggest using the generic

5. Monitor success

- Get regular feedback from staff on how the changes are going
- Monitor generic increases through COMPASS or GP clinical system

1. Give yourself some time:

- Identify key aspects for generic prescribing.
- See what resources are available to the practice
- Get prescribing information from COMPASS etc

Small Steps.....

can have a BIG impact !

The medicines that will have the greatest impact on savings are listed on page 4 of your COMPASS report