Items Unsuitable for Generic Prescribing October 2025

The following list provides examples of drugs / preparations which would NOT be recommended for generic prescribing. This list is guidance only and practices may wish to add other categories of their own depending on practice policy. For further information refer to the BNF or contact your SPPG pharmacy adviser. See the Cost effective choices list for guidance on using specified brands that are cost effective choices for HSC.

Medicine Category	Generic name / group	Examples (this list is not exhaustive)	Comments
Drugs with a narrow therapeutic index	Lithium	Priadel®, Camcolit®, Liskonum®	There may be differences in the bioavailability of the preparations and / or the difference between therapeutic and toxic plasma concentrations. Therefore the brand name should be prescribed (or manufacturer for tacrolimus liquid). Post–transplant, patients are initiated on generic mycophenolate mofetil. It is not necessary to provide a consistent brand of generic mycophenolate to post-transplant patients. See shared care guideline (SCG).
	Theophylline	Uniphyllin Continus®	
	Ciclosporin	Neoral®, Sandimmun®, Deximune®, Capimune® , Capsorin®	
	Tacrolimus capsules / tablets	Prograf®, Advagraf® and Envarsus®	
	Tacrolimus liquid	Prescribe generic name and state manufacturer	
Anti-epileptic drugs Category 1 (when used for epilepsy)	Phenytoin	Phenytoin Flynn hard capsules	**Anti-epileptic drugs Category 1** Ensure the patient is maintained on a specific manufacturer's product **Anti-epileptic drugs Category 2** *The need for continued supply of a particular manufacturer's product should be based on clinical judgement and consultation with patient / carer taking into account seizure frequency and treatment history. **Anti-epileptic drugs Category 3** It is usually unnecessary to ensure that patients are maintained on a specific manufacturer's product unless there are specific reasons such as patient anxiety and risk of confusion or dosing errors. Examples include levetiracetam, lacosamide, tiagabine, gabapentin, pregabalin, ethosuximide, vigabatrin.
	Carbamazepine	Tegretol®	
	Phenobarbital	Prescribe generic name and state manufacturer	
	Primidone	Prescribe generic name and state manufacturer	
Anti-epileptic drugs Category 2 (when used for epilepsy) for **some** patients*	Valproate, lamotrigine, perampanel, retigabine, rufinamide, clobazam, clonazepam, oxcarbazepine, eslicarbazepine, zonisamide, topiramate		
Some **modified-release** preparations	Diltiazem	Angitil XL®, Zemtard®, Slozem®, Adizem XL®, Tildiem LA®	The BNF states that brand names should be specified in certain instances as different versions of these modified-release preparations may not have the same clinical effect.
	Mesalazine	Octasa®, Asacol MR®, Pentasa®	
	Nifedipine	Adipine MR or XL®, Coracten SR or XL®, Adalat LA®	
	Methylphenidate	Concerta XL®, Delmosart®, Equasym XL®, Medikinet XL®	
	Rivastigmine patches	Alzest® transdermal patch, Exelon® transdermal patch, Zeyzelf® Twice Weekly transdermal patch	Daily and twice weekly application transdermal patches are available. Brand-name prescribing is recommended to reduce the risk of confusion in dispensing and administration.
Some **opioids**	Buprenorphine transdermal and oral lyophilisate	Butec®, Butrans®, Transtec®, Bupeaze®, Hapoctasin® , Espranor®	Buprenorphine transdermal patches are available as 72-hourly, 96-hourly and 7-day formulations. Brand name prescribing is recommended to reduce the risk of confusion and error in dispensing and administration. Buprenorphine oral lyophilisate has different bioavailability to other buprenorphine products and is not interchangeable with them. Fentanyl transdermal patches are available as matrix and reservoir formulations. Oromucosal fentanyl formulations are rapid-acting and are not interchangeable. Modified release morphine and oxycodone are available as 12-hourly and 24-hourly oral formulations. Brand-name prescribing is recommended to reduce the risk of confusion in dispensing and administration.
	Fentanyl transdermal and oromucosal	Mezolar®, Durogesic DTrans®, Fentalis®, Matrifen®, Tilofyl®, Abstral®, Actiq®, Effentora®	
	Morphine oral modified release	MST®, MXL®, Zomorph®, Morphgesic SR®	
	Oxycodone oral modified release	Longtec®, Oxycontin®, Ixyldone®, Onexila XL®, Oxeltra®, Oxylan®	
Some **inhaler devices**	Beclometasone (+/- Formoterol)	Qvar®, Clenil®, Fostair®, Kelhale®, Soprobec®	"Pressurised metered-doses inhalers with extra-fine particles (*Qvar*® and *Kelhale*®) are more potent than, and not interchangeable with, traditional CFC-containing and CFC-free inhalers (*Clenil Modulite*® and *Soprobec*®)." Always state the brand and type of device e.g. Accuhaler®, Turbohaler®. It is essential that the patient continues to receive the device that they have been trained to use. N.B. Tiotropium inhalation capsules are not interchangeable between different inhaler devices and must only be used with the correct device intended for their usage.
	Dry powder devices	Accuhaler®, Easyhaler®, Turbohaler®, Spiromax®, Ellipta®, NeumoHaler® Handihaler®, Zonda®	
Insulins	Prescribe ALL insulins by brand name		The BNF states, "Insulins must be prescribed and dispensed by brand name. Show container to patient or carer and confirm the expected version is dispensed".
Some **multi-ingredient** products	Stalevo®, Sastravi®, Stanek®, combined oral contraceptives; multi-ingredient GI preparations e.g. Peptac®, pancreatin, bowel cleansing solutions; multi-ingredient ENT preparations; certain Dermatology preparations, e.g. emollients, antiseptics.		Generic prescribing may not be practical or may cause confusion due to multiple ingredients. Some combination products are appropriate for generic prescribing using an approved 'co-' prefix, e.g. co-codamol.
Specific brands for **specific indications**	Denosumab	Prolia® or Xgeva®	These should be prescribed using the brand name to avoid confusion / aid product identification.
	Budesonide (oral)	Budenofalk®, Cortiment®, or Entocort®	
Biological and biosimilar medicines	Examples include: Enoxaparin (brands include Clexane® and Inhixa®): Etanercept (brands include Enbrel®, Erelzi®); Somatropin (brands include Genotropin®, Humatrope®) GLP-1 inhibitors (tablets and injectables)		Biosimilar medicines should be considered to be therapeutically equivalent to the originator biological medicine within their authorised indications. The choice of whether to prescribe a biosimilar medicine or the originator biological medicine rests with the clinician in consultation with the patient. Biological medicines (including biosimilar medicines) must be prescribed by brand name and the brand name specified on the prescription should be dispensed in order to avoid inadvertent switching. Automatic substitution of brands at the point of dispensing is not appropriate for biological medicines.
Miscellaneous	Antipsychotic depot injections; stoma care products and appliances; wound products; nutritional products including dysphagia products/thickeners; vaccines; NRT; pre-filled injectables, e.g. adrenaline, apomorphine, erythropoietin, LHRH analogues (e.g. Decapeptyl®); calcium salts, e.g. Adcal®; vitamin D, e.g. InVita-D3®; magnesium products, e.g. Magnaspartate®, Neomag®; levonorgestrel-releasing intrauterine systems, e.g. Mirena®; midazolam oromucosal solution, e.g. Buccolam®, Epistatus®, products that contain clobetasone or clobetasol.		These should be prescribed using the brand name to avoid confusion / aid product identification. Generic prescribing for these drugs may affect clinical response or contribute to administration incidents.