

Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Guidance

Issue: 24

Date: 20th August 2020

1. Medicines Safety: Free Learning and Resources

The Medicines Advice team at University Hospital Southampton have been working in partnership with Wessex AHSN to design a medicines safety website aimed at professionals in primary care such as doctors, pharmacists and nurses. <https://www.medicinesafety.co.uk> This site is new and additional material will be added over the coming year. It currently offers:

- [Clinical e-learning](#) about safety topics that we know can cause patients to be admitted to hospital such as [sulfonylureas](#) causing hypoglycaemia, or [anticholinergics](#) and their side effects. They are short tutorials – only lasting 20 minutes or so each.
- [Problem-solving pages](#) that will help you answer common medicines problems such as [managing shortages](#) or [drug interactions](#). Some of these pages also include e-learning. There's a list of free [online info sources](#) about medicines too.
- An [index to e-learning](#) about medicines safety that is available to NHS professionals from other providers. It's arranged by theme e.g. [administration of medicines](#), [diabetes and medicines](#). This is not yet complete.

If you have any suggestions on future topics you would like the website team to continue, then you can [contact them](#).

2. MHRA : New measures to support safe use of over-the-counter (OTC) stimulant laxatives [Link](#)

The safety of stimulant laxatives (bisacodyl, senna and sennosides, sodium picosulfate) has been under close review by the MHRA for many years following concerns relating to misuse and abuse, mainly in people with eating disorders.

The MHRA have introduced pack size restrictions, revised recommended ages for use, and new safety warnings for over-the-counter stimulant laxatives (orally and rectally administered) following a national safety review. Advise patients that dietary and lifestyle measures should be used first-line for relieving short-term occasional constipation and that stimulant laxatives should only be used if these measures and other laxatives (osmotic and bulk-forming) are ineffective.

Revised recommended ages for OTC use

Stimulant laxatives on general sale (in shops and supermarkets) will be recommended for use only in people 18 years or older. Stimulant laxatives should no longer be used in children under 12 years without advice from a prescriber, while products for children aged 12 to 17 years can be supplied under the supervision of a pharmacist.

3. Reminder : SCAN Antibiotic Prescribing Guidelines App available

South Central Antibiotic Network (SCAN) guidelines are available on the digital platform MicroGuide® – this can be accessed as an app on a phone or tablet device or via a web viewer on a desktop computer or laptop.

For a transition period up until 7th September 2020 these guidelines continue to be accessed as a pdf on the www.nhsantibioticguidelines.org.uk website as well as via MicroGuide^(R). To ensure that you have the most up to date version, please use the online link and do not save the pdf version on your computer, or print the guidelines.

Accessing on your desktop:

The guidelines can be accessed directly: <https://viewer.microguide.global/SCAN/SCAN>
This url will remain the same (even when individual guidelines are updated) therefore consider adding this to your favourites.

Accessing on your phone/tablet:

The MicroGuide^(R) app is available to download free from the App store (Apple) or Google Play (Android). Search for **MicroGuide^(R)** in App Store/Google Play and download (as per icon below).

Once the user agreement has been reviewed you will be asked to create a profile. Many other CCGs and hospital trusts use this platform for antimicrobial guidance so the appropriate guidance '**South Central Antimicrobial Network**' will need to be selected from the list of guidelines available. Do not select the acute trust that you are usually associated with as those will be the acute trust guidelines. Complete other boxes as appropriate. Then click 'Submit'.

Click inside the circle next to the '**South Central Antimicrobial Network**' and finally on top left click '**get selected guide**' (for both Apple and Android users).



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Please contact your CCG Medicines Management team if further assistance required.