

Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Guidance

Issue: 28

Date: 8 October 2020

1. Priadel (lithium) update

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) have begun a formal investigation into the activities of Essential Pharma and their earlier decision to withdraw Priadel from the UK market ([Link](#)). The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) had requested that the CMA impose 'interim measures' to pause the withdrawal of Priadel while the investigation is ongoing.

In the light of this announcement there is no longer a need to progress any system wide switching of patients from Priadel to an alternative brand of lithium at this current time. Please await further updates for advice. Patients who require lithium should continue to be managed in line with usual clinical practice underpinned by NICE guidance CG 185. ([Link](#))

Information about supply from the latest DHSC update:

DHSC are aware of disruptions in obtaining supplies of Priadel and Camcolit tablets and are working with Essential Pharma to address this issue. To ensure equitable distribution of supplies of Priadel and Camcolit, Essential Pharma have placed monthly quotas with wholesalers (including Alliance Healthcare, AAH and Phoenix) based on their historic demand.

If emergency stock above these quotas are required before quotas are refreshed (on the 1st of each month), pharmacies are requested to contact their wholesalers' customer services first. If wholesalers are out of stock pharmacies can place emergency orders directly with Movianto UK. (<tel:01234248500> / email: orders.UK@movianto.com)

2. Allergy status reminder

There have been a number of recent incidents reported around drug allergies. Please remember to check allergy status when prescribing or administering medicines. Documentation of allergy status is particularly important during the transition of care. Please see NICE guidance CG183 Drug allergy: diagnosis and management as an important reminder ([Link](#))

3. SIGN guidelines: Management of suspected bacterial lower urinary tract infection in adult women. September 2020. ([Link](#))

This updated SIGN guideline covers younger women aged 16–64 years, older women aged 65 years and over and women of any age using an indwelling, intermittent or suprapubic catheter. It also includes the diagnosis and management of recurrent UTI in these groups.

Key recommendations outlines in the guideline are:

- Diagnose a UTI in the presence of two or more urinary symptoms (dysuria, frequency, urgency, visible haematuria or nocturia) and a positive dipstick test result for nitrite.
- Consider NSAIDs as first-line treatment in women aged <65 years with suspected uncomplicated lower UTI who describe their symptoms as mild.
- Consider NSAIDs as an alternative to an antibiotic following a discussion of risks and benefits in women aged <65 years with suspected uncomplicated lower UTI when symptoms are moderate to severe.
- Use short (3-day) courses of antimicrobials for treatment for Lower UTI, as this is clinically effective and minimises the risk of adverse events.
- Do not treat asymptomatic bacteriuria in non-pregnant women of any age.

For local advice, please refer to South Central Antimicrobial Network (SCAN) guidelines. These are now available on the MicroGuide app. See previous bulletin 24 for information on how to download the app. Guidance also available via the SCAN website ([Link](#))

4. Specialist Pharmacy Service: The Use of Generic Antiepileptics Drugs in Patients with Epilepsy. 28 September 2020 ([Link](#))

This document represents the consensus views on the safety and appropriateness of switching between brand and generic formulations of antiepileptic drugs in patients with epilepsy.

The recommendations are intended to be used alongside the MHRA drug safety document: Antiepileptic drugs: updated advice on switching between different manufacturers' products. Drug Safety Update November 2017 ([Link](#)).

5. NHS England and Improvement extend suspension of eRD patient consent rules until 31st March 2021. ([Link](#))

Please click on the link to see the full letter which has been released to Primary Care.

Previous bulletins can be found at:

www.westhampshireccq.nhs.uk/medicines-optimisation/covid-19-medicines-information/covid-19-medicines-optimisation-bulletins