

Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Guidance

Issue: 30

Date: 28th October 2020

1. MHRA- Yellow Card Scheme- “Every report counts” [\(link\)](#)

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Yellow Card reporting of suspected adverse drug reactions has decreased, especially from healthcare professionals. Reporting remains essential to patient safety. Remain vigilant for suspected adverse drug reactions and report them to the [Yellow Card scheme online](#) or via the Yellow Card app (download from the [Apple store app](#) or [Google Play Store](#))

The MHRA also encourages your support during #MedSafetyWeek on 2–8 November 2020 by sharing material on social media and discussing with colleagues and patients the importance of reporting suspected adverse drug reactions, where *every report counts*.

2. UKMI: What is the evidence for verapamil for prevention of cluster headache? [\(link\)](#)

This updated Medicines Q&A from UK Medicines Information (UKMI) evaluates the available evidence on the use of verapamil for the prevention of cluster headache, concluding that it is highly effective at preventing episodic cluster headaches, but may be less effective for chronic cluster headache.

3. New Medicine Service – Community Pharmacies

As detailed in the PCN DES, Structured medication reviews and medicines optimisation: guidance, [\(link\)](#), this requires PCNs to work with community pharmacies to connect patients appropriately to the New Medicine Service [\(link\)](#) which supports adherence to newly prescribed medicines. The service currently supports people with the following conditions who have been prescribed a new medicine:

- asthma
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- type 2 diabetes
- hypertension
- who have been given a new blood-thinning medicine.

This community pharmacy service is by no means new, and has been delivered by community pharmacists since 2011. It offers up to three 10-15 minute private consultations

with a pharmacist, to support the initiation of the new treatment, support patient self-care and to help identify and resolve any problems or issues quickly for the patient over the course of a month. It is free to the patient.

Practices should liaise with their local pharmacies to agree how best to support this service. A suggested example would be to add a note (e.g. *NMS*) to the new prescription item the first time it is prescribed. This will then alert the pharmacist that it is newly prescribed and the patient is eligible for the service.

Please note the service is not applicable to dose changes, only to newly started medicines.

Prepared by Anita Bhardwaj, Sue Wakelin and Dr Emma Harris, on behalf of the Hampshire and IoW CCGs Medicines Optimisation Teams

Previous bulletins may be found at:

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