

Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Guidance

Issue: 49

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1. NICE guidance: Shared decision making (NG197). [Link](#)

This guideline promotes ways for healthcare professionals and people using services to work together to make decisions about treatment and care. It includes recommendations on training, communicating risks, benefits and consequences, and using decision aids. This guideline includes recommendations on:

- embedding shared decision making at an organisational level
- putting shared decision making into practice
- patient decision aids
- communicating risks, benefits and consequences

2. NHS England: Letter to women and girls taking sodium valproate [Link](#)

A letter has been sent to women and girls aged 12-55 years, who are currently prescribed sodium valproate. The letter also contains important reminders of safety considerations, including use of contraception, pregnancy and regular prescribing reviews. This letter can be accessed through the link above.

3. The green book update – chapter 2 [Link](#)

The chapter has been updated with information on consent and the addition of new resources.

Consent must be obtained before starting any treatment or physical investigation, or before providing personal care for a patient. This includes the administration of all vaccines. The guidance in this chapter is based both on the current legal position and the standards expected of health professionals by their regulatory bodies.

4. Aliskiren reminder

NICE hypertension guidance states there is insufficient evidence of aliskiren's effectiveness to determine its suitability for use in resistant hypertension. Whilst aliskiren has shown comparable efficacy to other antihypertensive agents in

terms of blood pressure reduction, its effects on mortality and long-term morbidity are currently unknown. Aliskiren is also on the list of medicines NHS England has stated are not for routine prescribing in primary care. Therefore this is a non formulary medicine and is not recommended for use in primary care.

5. Supply disruption alert - Champix (varenicline) 0.5mg and 1mg tablets [Link](#)

All Champix® (varenicline) products are unavailable until further notice with very limited residual stock may be available in pharmacies.

- Patients currently prescribed this treatment will require review and switching to nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) unless contraindicated.
- No new patients should be initiated on Champix® (varenicline) products.
- Prescribers initiating smoking cessation treatment for new patients should consider prescribing NRT or bupropion 150mg prolonged release tablets unless contraindicated.
- Helping a patient to stop smoking should not be delayed if they are motivated to stop as other effective options are available.

This alert contains further information and action for providers.

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Previous bulletins can be found at: <https://gp-portal.westhampshireccg.nhs.uk/medicines/covid-19-medicines-information/covid-19-medicines-optimisation-bulletins/>