

Withdrawal of pholcodine-containing medicines

Pholcodine-containing cough and cold medicines are being withdrawn from the UK market as a precaution following a review which found that their benefits do not outweigh the increased risk of the very rare event of anaphylaxis to neuromuscular blocking agents (NMBAs) used in general anaesthesia.

Healthcare professionals should advise patients to stop taking pholcodine-containing medicines. Cough and cold medications are included in the guidance from NHSE on OTC medicines with limited clinical effectiveness, which are not expected to be routinely prescribed in primary care.

Practices should review any affected patients as appropriate (Search available in Dorset SystmOne GPs> Medicines optimisation> Alerts. Pharmacies and dispensing practices should no longer supply pholcodine-containing medicines and should follow the [MHRA Class 2 Medicines Recall Notice](#) to quarantine stock of pholcodine-containing medicines and return it to the manufacturer.

Continue to report suspected adverse drug reactions to the [Yellow Card scheme](#). For more information refer to the [MHRA Drug Safety Update](#).

Wessex AHSN Polypharmacy Action Learning Set (ALS)

The Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) polypharmacy Action Learning Set (ALS) is for GPs and other primary care prescribers. Join the Polypharmacy Action Learning Sets (ALS) to help build your confidence in, and understanding of, the complex issues surrounding stopping inappropriate medicines safely. The Polypharmacy ALS will also help Primary Care Networks to deliver the medicines optimisation elements of the Directed Enhanced Services contract and contribute to QoF.

The next Polypharmacy sessions are to be held on the following dates: 10 May, 24 May and 7 June 2023 (9.30am – 12 noon). Delegates need to attend all three sessions. Find out more and book now via the following link: [Polypharmacy Action Learning Set Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#)

Reclassification of Madopar® products as 'special containers'

From 1 February 2023, all branded or generically written prescriptions for Madopar® (co-beneldopa), across all strengths, now have 'special container' status and will be provided in original manufacturer pack sizes of 100 capsules/tablets.

GPs may be approached by people with Parkinson's or their carers to discuss their prescription for co-beneldopa/Madopar®. Please ensure any necessary changes are made to their records, so they get the amount they need. GPs are encouraged to review the records of their patients with Parkinson's who are on co-beneldopa/Madopar® and either make a change to the quantity they're prescribed, so they have enough medication each month or speak to their patient and explore their preference for their medication. For more information please see the [PSNC note](#) or the [Parkinson's Disease UK story](#).

Clinical Commissioning Local Improvement Plan (CCLIP)

Included in CCLIP is investment for implementation of the updated [NICE Guidance NG28](#). The investment adds up to 60p per 1000 patient list.

There are 2 focuses: Firstly, offering SGLT2 inhibitors to people with CVD or Heart Failure who are currently receiving metformin monotherapy. Secondly, initiation of GLP-1 agonists in line with NICE guidance after failure with metformin and 2 other oral treatments and review of their ongoing efficacy in individual cases.

SystmOne searches are located at Dorset SystmOne GPs> CCLIP 23 24> Prescribing Safety & Quality

Webinars to support practices are available at <https://nhsdorset.nhs.uk/medicines/value/>

Quick bites

- The Dorset Formulary is available at: www.dorsetformulary.nhs.uk.
- Following on from the discussions with both PSNC and DHSC, the transmitter for Dexcom One will be listed in the England and Wales Drug Tariff from 1st March 2023. To overcome the obstacles posed by zero cost items, the sensor price has been reduced and the cost apportioned to the transmitter. The annual pricing works out the same – the price of the sensors has been reduced to accommodate the pricing of the transmitters. The Dexcom ONE CGM system (starter kit, 1x transmitter and 1x sensor), will also be added to the drug tariff.
- **A reminder that for non-medical prescribers** joining or leaving your practice or PCN, please let us know – forms and guidance for this purpose can be found on the [GP tenancy website](#).
- UKHSA [Vaccine update: issue 335, February 2023](#) featuring new HPV (human papillomavirus) teaching resource; Save a Life – for university accommodation and further education settings; vaccine supply for routine and non-routine vaccination programmes.
- [Polypharmacy in older people: A guide for healthcare professionals](#) (All Wales Medicines Strategy Group). Includes practical guides for stopping antihypertensives, benzos & Z-drugs, oral corticosteroids, antidepressants, bisphosphonates, acid suppressants, opioids in non-cancer pain, gabapentinoids in neuropathic pain, and antipsychotics, AChE inhibitors & memantine in dementia.
- [National primary care clinical pathway for constipation in children](#) – supports clinicians in the prevention and management of constipation in children and young people by providing a clear and standardised approach, based on guidelines from NICE, the BNFC and clinical expert groups. Other resources also available to watch or download.
- [Withdrawing from SSRI antidepressants: advice for primary care](#) (British Journal of General Practice) Article discusses why people experience withdrawal, the symptoms, how to differentiate between withdrawal and relapse, and how to stop an antidepressant, including general advice on tapering, and links to further support and guidance.
- [Spring 2023 COVID-19 vaccination programme](#) – JCVI advises that an extra booster vaccine dose in spring 2023 should be offered, as a precautionary measure to adults aged 75 years and over, residents in a care home for older adults and individuals aged 5 years and over who are immunosuppressed.
- [COVID-19: the green book, chapter 14a: updated](#) to include spring booster campaign, explanation of the end of universal primary and booster offers, and describing the move to only offer vaccine during seasonal campaigns.
- NHS England have created a new online patient safety incident reporting system called 'Learn from patient safety events', known as 'LFPSE'. Dorset GP practices should be registered for LFPSE and reporting all patient safety incidents to this platform from **April 2023**. This will replace the current incident reporting system (Ulysses). Please note that any member of GP practice staff will be able to use the LFPSE system (including GPs, practice managers, non-medical prescribers and administrative staff). The Patient Safety and Risk team have written a short [guide to getting started](#).
- Health Education England are offering 100 fully funded places on the GP Pharmacy Technician Medicines Optimisation Training Programme for pharmacy technicians working in primary care supporting General Practice. Find out more and apply now! Visit [Pharmacy Workforce Development South](#). Registration closes at midnight on 31st March 2023.

REGIONAL MEDICINES INFORMATION SERVICE

If you work in primary care (including community pharmacy), specialist medicines advice can be obtained from SPS via **0300 7708564** or email askspn.nhs@sps.direct. (Staff in Dorset NHS Trusts should seek advice from their pharmacy teams).