The NHS expects the current spend on DOACs to increase in the future as more patients with Atrial Fibrillation (AF) are diagnosed and treated. As a result, the guidance for DOAC prescribing has changed nationally and in Dorset with a new recommendation to prescribe Edoxaban as first choice, where appropriate.

**Community Pharmacy communication – DOACs**

(Please note that Edoxaban will be highlighted as first choice on the Dorset Formulary but all other DOACs will remain green to allow the appropriate choice to be made for each patient, the Dorset formulary can be found here www.dorsetformulary.nhs.uk )

The intent of including DOACs as one of the new Investment and Impact Fund (IIF) indicators and introducing the revised prescribing guidance is that any savings released from changing to Edoxaban would allow more patients with AF and other cardiovascular disease to be diagnosed and treated.

**Is Edoxaban as good as the other DOACs?**

* Research shows that Edoxaban is safe and effective at reducing the risk of stroke in patients with atrial fibrillation and is available at a lower cost to the NHS through an NHS rebate scheme.
* The rebate on Edoxaban is in place for five years.
* The manufacturers of other DOACs have not reduced the price or offered     sufficient rebates to review the decision of Edoxaban.
* A further review will only be considered if clinical evidence emerges that another DOAC is more effective and/or safer than Edoxaban; in the unlikely event of a significant price change of an equivalent product; or when a generic DOAC is available.

**What is the role of Community Pharmacy?**

Although the initial medication change will be initiated and carried out by the GP, Community pharmacy will play an important role in supporting the patient with this medication change. This can be done in the following ways:

1. **New Medicine Service (NMS)**

With this new guidance, there is likely to be an increase in prescriptions for Edoxaban and therefore a potential increase in referrals to the New Medicine Service. These prescriptions are likely to either be for a new initiation or a change from a previous DOAC for atrial fibrillation, and therefore these patients will be eligible to be included in NMS.

This potential increase in NMS referrals is a great opportunity for community pharmacy to offer their support to these patients and to work collaboratively with the relevant PCNs.

1. **General counselling**

The European Heart Rhythm Association (EHRA) recommends that patients receive education following initiation of anticoagulation treatment, with particular emphasis on achieving adherence.

Patients should be encouraged to fill in and carry the patient alert card contained within the box of tablets.

There are no known issues with using Edoxaban in a compliance device.

Please see link to FAQs for more information this document is hosted on the Dorset Formulary <http://www.dorsetformulary.nhs.uk/chaptersSubDetails.asp?FormularySectionID=2&SubSectionRef=02.08.02&SubSectionID=A100#5332>