

Continuous Glucose Monitoring: Formulary update

After system wide consultation, real time CGM devices have been added to the Dorset Formulary as AMBER (specialist initiation) and are now available to prescribe using FP10 in addition to Freestyle Libre. Access has been expedited to increase device choice for those people who already are eligible to receive Freestyle libre devices on prescription in advance of any decision to expand the availability of CGM in Dorset.

Eligibility criteria have not changed and are specified in the updated Commissioning Statement. This means that CGM is not commissioned in type 2 diabetes except where people have cystic fibrosis or undergo haemodialysis treatment in combination with insulin management.

For further information including FAQs, SystemOne processes, shared decision tools & pathway please refer to the [CGM section in Dorset Formulary](#).

Valproate: reminder of PPP requirements & new safety measures to be introduced

Following a [new safety review](#) conducted in light of concerns that the current regulatory requirements for safe use are not being consistently followed, the Commission on Human Medicines (CHM) has advised that there should be greater scrutiny of the way valproate is prescribed and that further risk minimisation measures are required. The CHM recommends that:

- No patients (male or female) under the age of 55 years should be initiated on valproate (for any indication) unless 2 specialists independently consider and document that there is no other effective or tolerated treatment.
- For patients under 55 years currently receiving valproate, 2 specialists should independently consider and document that there is no other effective or tolerated treatment or the risks do not apply.

These new measures will be implemented over the coming months. In the meantime, GPs and pharmacists should continue to provide repeat prescriptions for valproate whilst adhering to the current [Valproate Pregnancy Prevention Programme](#), ensuring patients receive the patient card, patient information leaflet and packaging bearing pregnancy warnings.

We have published [Spotlight on Medicines Safety](#) to provide additional Dorset information on prescribing patterns. Dorset Healthcare University NHSFT have requested general practice to refer patients of childbearing potential receiving valproate for mental health conditions if they don't currently have a specialist review.

Important shortages/supply disruptions

- Supplies of antibiotics for the treatment of Group A Strep have seen a surge in demand and may be temporarily in limited supply at certain wholesalers and pharmacies. [NHSE Guidance](#) has been issued on what antibiotics can be used if first line treatment is not available. Also refer to the [DHSC Medicine Supply Notification](#) and the recent guidance from the Medicines Team about [electronic prescriptions](#) for antibiotics during the current surges in demand.

Thusane Action Reliever knee brace

We have recently received a flurry of enquiries about the "Action Reliever knee brace". It is listed in the [drug tariff](#), so it can be prescribed on the NHS. However, currently the knee brace is not listed on the Dorset formulary, and we therefore would not normally expect to see it prescribed locally. We encourage requests to be returned to the requestor to either prescribe themselves or arrange supply within their service, pending a formulary application and a review of clinical and cost effectiveness, and where these knee braces sit in terms of patient pathway/prescribing responsibility.

Dupilumab (Dupixent ▼): risk of ocular adverse reactions

Dupilumab is NICE approved for severe asthma and moderate to severe dermatitis. It is known to be commonly associated with cases of conjunctivitis and allergic conjunctivitis, eye pruritus, blepharitis, and dry eye and with infrequent cases of keratitis and ulcerative keratitis, especially in patients with atopic dermatitis. Healthcare professionals should be alert to the risks of ocular reactions and promptly review new onset or worsening ocular symptoms, referring patients for ophthalmological examination as appropriate.

Dupilumab is a black triangle medicine – report suspected ADRs to the [Yellow Card scheme](#). NB: Although dupilumab is 'red' (hospital only) on Dorset formulary, it should be added to the patient's medical record on SystmOne as 'other medication'. Refer to [guidance](#) for more information on doing this.

European Medicines Agency recommends withdrawal of pholcodine medicines from EU

The EMA's safety committee, PRAC, has concluded its review of medicines containing pholcodine, which are used in adults and children to treat non-productive (dry) cough and, in combination with other active substances, for the treatment of symptoms of cold and flu, and has recommended the [revocation of the EU marketing authorisations](#) for these medicines.

Healthcare professionals should consider appropriate treatment alternatives and advise patients to stop taking pholcodine-containing medicines. Healthcare professionals should also check whether patients scheduled to undergo general anaesthesia with neuromuscular blocking agents have used pholcodine in the previous 12 months, and remain aware of the risk of anaphylactic reactions in these patients.

Prescribing data shows that in the three months to the end of September 2022, there were 74 items of pholcodine linctus prescribed in primary care, some with volumes of 1000ml or more. 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.

Quick bites

- The Dorset Formulary is available at: www.dorsetformulary.nhs.uk.
- NICE [patient decision aid](#) on asthma inhalers and climate change – supporting people with asthma to consider the use of inhalers with a smaller carbon footprint
- [KidzMed](#) is an e-Learning resource from Health Education England for healthcare professionals teaching children to swallow oral solid dosage forms. UHD has produced a [video](#) on this topic, highlighting the benefits of teaching children to swallow tablets and capsules.
- The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) have made [final recommendations](#) on changes to the childhood immunisation schedule. The changes are needed because the Menitorix® (Hib/MenC) vaccine is being discontinued.
- [Medication Safety Evidence Summaries: November 2022](#)
- Practice and PCN pharmacy staff: refer to attached flyer from PrescQIPP about accessing a wealth of FREE resources to support your work.

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 askspnhs@sps.direct. (Staff in Dorset NHS Trusts should seek advice from their pharmacy teams).

☆ MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR! ☆