

Warfarin and tramadol interaction

A UK coroner has issued a [prevention of future deaths report](#) after a patient was co-prescribed warfarin and tramadol and sadly died as a result of a bleed in the brain. The patient had an INR almost 12 times the normal level when she was admitted to hospital. Warfarin has now been added to the BNF as an interacting drug with tramadol, with an interaction marked 'severe'. A search is available in SystmOne to identify patients prescribed this combination (Dorset SystmOne GPs>Medicines Optimisation>Alerts)

Codeine linctus (codeine oral solutions): reclassification to prescription-only medicine

Following a public consultation, codeine linctus is to be reclassified from a pharmacy-only medicine (P) to a prescription-only medicine (POM) owing to the risk of dependence, addiction, and overdose. Codeine linctus will only be available on prescription following assessment with a healthcare professional, for review of symptoms and to check for other conditions which may be the cause of the cough. It is only considered to be effective in the treatment of chronic cough lasting over 8 weeks. For more information, read the [MHRA Drug Safety update](#) in full.

Safety with oral liquids – include both mass and volume

When prescribing oral liquids, please specify the strength of formulation **and** dose in both mass (mg) **and** volume (mls). An example of this is 'Morphine sulphate oral solution 10mg/5ml. Take 5mg (2.5ml) four times a day'. Please ensure patients and carers are aware that different strengths of liquids medicines are available, and if there is any ambiguity about the dose to be given it should be clarified with a healthcare professional.

Changes to prescribers in your practice

The Medicines Team has become aware that at the moment there are many prescribers working in Dorset PCNs that do not appear in the NHS Business Services Authority (NHS BSA) database. This can occur for a couple of reasons:

- where prescribers are generating prescriptions in a practice or practices but have not yet been linked to any practice by way of a notification to the NHSBSA, **OR**
- where prescribers are already registered with the NHSBSA as a prescriber linked to one or more practices, but where they are generating prescriptions from a practice they are not currently linked to.

These situations can occur in relation to both medical (GP) and non-medical prescribers.

For GP prescribers, please ensure that as soon as is practicable, the prescriber themselves updates their profile on the [PCSE portal](#) to reflect any changes in prescribing location(s) and the relevant practice manager(s) in the PCN approve these changes. The changes on the PCSE portal prompt PCSE to then send notifications to the NHSBSA to link/unlink prescribers to practices.

For non-medical prescribers in your practice or PCN, please notify the Medicines Team of changes – more information and the NMP 'Change of Circumstances' form can be found on [Sharepoint](#).

Hydrocortisone prescriptions for patients with adrenal insufficiency

When prescribing injectable formulations of hydrocortisone for patients with adrenal insufficiency (such as Addison's disease), patients will require suitable injection paraphernalia for reconstitution and administration of the hydrocortisone. Whilst an appropriate diluent is prescribable, needles and syringes are not. Therefore, patients may ask the practice to provide them with a small number of needles and syringes from practice stock to use for this purpose. It is expected that this will not be a common occurrence as the overall number of patients in Dorset requiring self-administration of hydrocortisone in an emergency (adrenal crisis) will be very small and the patient's provider Trust have stocks to supply when they see the patients.

Carbimazole Tablets

Please be aware that different strengths of carbimazole tablets have significantly different costs to the NHS. Where possible, please prescribe carbimazole as 20mg tablets or 5mg tablets, or a combination of these. The price differences are shown in the table below (correct as of February 24)

Strength of carbimazole	Quantity/pack	Price per pack	Price per tablet
5mg	100	£1.81	£0.02
20mg	100	£2.66	£0.03
10mg	100	£81.32	£0.81
15mg	100	£237.94	£2.38

Treatment is usually given over 12 to 18 months. Use of carbimazole is associated with several safety topics – [increased risk of congenital malformations](#) when used in pregnancy, [risk of acute pancreatitis](#), and risk of neutropenia and agranulocytosis. Refer to [SPS guidance](#) for recommended monitoring schedule.

Drug shortages / supply issues / product changes

- On the 23rd January 2024 the Department of Health & Social Care issued a Medicines Supply Notification, MSN/2024/008, regarding the supply of Lantus® Solostar® 100units/ml solution for injection 3ml pre-filled pens in the UK. Sanofi wish to reassure you that there is **no shortage** of this product supplied via Sanofi UK at this time.

Quick bites

- The Dorset Formulary is available at: www.dorsetformulary.nhs.uk.
- GP intelligence ('niggles') reporting – NHS Dorset have created a quick and easy [Microsoft form for reporting acute trust contract or pathway breaches](#) (for example non-receipt of discharge summaries, non-supply of discharge medication, non-issue of fit notes, and inappropriate requests of primary care). The link can be saved on your desktop for easy access, and no login is required.
- NHS Pharmacy First went 'live' on 31 January 2024. This service builds on the previous Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS) by enabling community pharmacies to manage patients for seven common conditions, following specific clinical pathways. Find out more on the [NHS England website](#).
- Suicidal ideation has recently been added as an adverse effect (with unknown frequency) to all oral tablet formulations of finasteride. Patients should be encouraged to report any suicidal ideation associated with finasteride to a healthcare professional.
- [Metoject PEN](#) brand of methotrexate is changing design to a button free pen with a different injection process. The [manufacturer's website](#) has patient information including a video on use of the pen.
- Consider prescribing Zacco® brand 10mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free (£49.50/150ml) as this is more cost effective than prescribing generic clobazam 10mg/5ml oral suspension (£97.07/150ml).

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

This newsletter is for healthcare professionals. It represents what is known at the time of writing so information may be subsequently superseded.