

Valproate use in men: men and their partners should use effective contraception

In the [August 2024 MHRA Drug Safety Update](#), it was highlighted that a retrospective observational study has indicated a possible association between valproate use by men around the time of conception and an increased risk of neurodevelopmental disorders in their children.

Inform male patients who may father children of this possible increased risk and the recommendation to use effective contraception during valproate treatment and for at least 3 months after stopping valproate.

NICE consultation on obesity injection

NHS Dorset notes the consultation on NHS England's [proposals](#) for a phased launch of obesity injection, tirzepatide (Mounjaro®).

NHS Dorset are considering the soon to be released NICE TA and how it will be provided within weight management services locally in the expected 180 days after publication.

NICE draft documentation has concluded the evidence suggests that tirzepatide is more effective than semaglutide when used alongside diet, exercise and psychological support.

How this will affect current services when the NICE TA is published:

- Secondary care weight management services will be able to provide tirzepatide. Prescribing or monitoring responsibility for tirzepatide will not be passed to primary care from those services.
- Primary care are not commissioned to provide weight management services and will not be able to prescribe tirzepatide for obesity.
- Private provider or any qualified provider service requests for general practice to take on prescribing will not be accommodated.
- Shared care with primary care will not be supported until the drug is classified as AMBER status in the Dorset Formulary and a template is agreed with all providers.

A review of weight management services in Dorset is ongoing and the drug provision is part of this review to ensure a complete service including wraparound care can be provided to the population of Dorset to enable the best outcomes for each patient.

Supply and administration of medicines by dental hygienists and dental therapists

Amendments to the [Human Medicines Regulations 2012 \(HMR 2012\)](#) came into effect from 26 June 2024. These amendments enable suitably trained and supported dental hygienists and dental therapists to personally supply and administer specified medicines without requiring use of a patient group direction (PGD) or patient specific direction (PSD) from a dentist.

These amendments enable dental hygienists and dental therapists to lawfully sell, supply and/or administer to patients the medicines listed in the legislation without needing a PGD or PSD. It should be noted that the amendments **do not** allow independent prescribing. For the full list of medicines that can be supplied or administered, refer to the [NHS England website](#).

Weight threshold for use of paediatric adrenaline autoinjectors

When prescribing EpiPen Jnr® for paediatric patients, ensure that the patient's weight is noted. The [summary of product characteristics for EpiPen Jnr®](#) states that it is only suitable for use in children weighing 7.5 – 25 kg (1st 2lb to 4st approximately). For children weighing more than 25kg, EpiPen® auto injector 0.3 mg (adult formulation) is recommended.

The [paediatric version of Jext®](#) also has a similar weight threshold – the 150mcg device is for patients weighing between 15kg and 30kg (2st 5lb to 4st 10lb approximately). Patients over 30kg should be prescribed the adult Jext® device (300mcg).

Drug shortages / supply issues

- A system-wide 'Task & Finish' group has been established to provide guidance on the methylphenidate shortages. This will be shared with you shortly. In the meantime, please follow the SPS guidance [here](#).
- Trandolapril 2mg and 4mg capsules are expected to be out of stock until late December 2024. Prescribers are asked not to initiate new patients on this treatment and to consider switching patients with insufficient supplies to an alternative ACE inhibitor.

SCAN Antimicrobial Prescribing Guidelines– change from Microguide to the Eolas platform

SCAN (antimicrobial) Guidelines have moved from the MicroGuide platform to the new Eolas Medical platform. The content and format of the existing SCAN Guidelines will remain the same, but the new platform has extra functionality, including integration with the BNF and NICE Guidelines.

For desktop access open the SCAN guidance via the following link: <https://bit.ly/EolasSCAN> and then save the link as a shortcut or bookmark on your device.



Alternatively, Eolas can be accessed as an app on a phone or tablet device. Use the app store (Google Play store or Apple app store) to search for download the app. Download/install the app on your device.

Once you have completed the short process to open an account with Eolas, then scan the QR code with your phone/tablet, and it will add the SCAN guidance to your 'space' for quick reference.



Please note the Microguide platform has been decommissioned and is no longer accessible as of the 27th Sep 2024.

Quick bites

- The Dorset Formulary is available at: www.dorsetformulary.nhs.uk.
- [NHS England South West Lead Pharmacist mass vaccination monthly update](#) (includes information on the Covid-19 vaccination programme, influenza vaccinations, BCG, mPox, MMR and upcoming vaccine related learning events).
- The month 4 prescribing and quarter 2 budget is available on the [DiiS portal](#). July costs were slightly higher. Costs do fluctuate month by month but if you have concerns about the trajectory of your spend please email medicine.question@nhsdorset.nhs.uk. If you have not yet registered for the DiiS then you can do so via [this link](#). For those interested in learning more about DiiS, there are upcoming familiarisation sessions available – let us know if you want to attend.
- Reminder: we have now developed a new online form to make it easier for you to let us know about NMP leavers and joiners to your practice/PCN. Access it via the [NHS Dorset website](#). Bookmark the page so it is easy to find! **NB:** this form is only intended for changes to NMPs, changes to medical (GP) prescribers should be submitted via the individual doctor's PCSE account.
- Practices are asked to ensure that they are correctly ordering, receiving, storing and managing the RSV vaccine and any other vaccines they administer as per the storage and distribution instructions in the [Green Book](#). Following delivery, RSV vaccines should be stored in their original package in a refrigerator at 2°C to 8°C. Vaccines including RSV vaccines, should not be stored in non-refrigerated spaces as heat will speed up the decline in potency and monoclonal antibodies, thus reducing the vaccines shelf life. All vaccine cold chain breaches should be reported in accordance local procedures and via ImmForm.
- [World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week \(WAAW\) and European Antibiotic Awareness Day \(EAAD\)](#) resources – contains main messages of the November 2024 campaign, ideas for themes, sustainability information, and digital resources.

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