



Medicines Update

February 2024

Polypharmacy Action Learning Set Workshops

One of the CQC's [clinical searches](#) that are looked at during inspections is focused on polypharmacy: 'Identifying patients receiving 10 or more medicines who have no medication review recorded in the past 18 months'.

To increase confidence in stopping inappropriate medicines during medication reviews, we would encourage all prescribers across LLR to access the free local Polypharmacy Action Learning Set workshops hosted by Health Innovation East Midlands.

To find out more please see flyer attached.

Practice Medicines Co-ordinator Training

Practice Medicines Co-ordinator (PMC) training is a CPD certified course provided by PrescQIPP for non-clinical GP practice staff that manage the repeat prescribing process. This training has been significantly updated by PrescQIPP in 2020, therefore staff who have completed this course in previous years are eligible to access the training again.

The ICB has secured funding for PMC training to make it free for practices. The training can be accessed through the PrescQIPP website (See Flyer attached). There are a limited number of training spaces, so please notify Sajeda.hussein@nhs.net of how many staff will be signing up to the training for each practice.

ADHD Medicine Supply Update

LPT pharmacy continues to procure and stock any medication that is consistently difficult to obtain by community pharmacy. Prescriptions can continue to be sent to the patients' usual community pharmacy and they can order from LPT if needed.

In summary:

Xaggitin XL / Xenidate XL / Affenid XL – there are some intermittent supply problems, but primary care is permitted to switch between these bio-equivalent preparations during the shortage period.

Lisdexamfetamine – not all strengths are available. Primary Care are encouraged prescribe this generically so that community pharmacy can dispense the best available product.

Atomoxetine – LPT pharmacy has stock of an unlicensed product covering all capsule strengths, if needed; they are also trying to obtain the liquid.

Guanfacine m/r – LPT has plenty of an unlicensed product covering all strengths. Primary care to prescribe this generically so that community pharmacy can dispense the best available product.

NEW Fluoroquinolone Antibiotic MHRA Restrictions

Systemic (by mouth, injection or inhalation) fluoroquinolones can cause long-lasting (up to months or years), disabling and potentially irreversible side effects, sometimes affecting multiple body systems and senses (see March 2019 MHRA [Drug Safety Update](#) and August 2023 MHRA [Drug Safety Update](#)).

The MHRA published another [Drug Safety Update](#) in January 2024 restricting systemic fluoroquinolone use further, so they must only be used in situations where other antibiotics, that are commonly recommended for the infection, are inappropriate to use.

Please ensure that local LLR Antimicrobial Guidelines are followed when prescribing antibiotics. The LLR Antimicrobial Policy and Guidance for Primary Care document can be found on the LLR APC website [here](#). LLR Medicines Optimisation Team are currently in the process of reviewing these guidelines considering the new alert.

Fluoroquinolones **must not be prescribed** for:

- Non-severe or self-limiting bacterial infections
- Non-bacterial conditions such as non-bacterial (chronic) prostatitis

Avoid fluoroquinolone use in patients who:

- Have previously had a serious adverse reaction to a quinolone (for example nalidixic acid) or a fluoroquinolone antibiotic
- Are also taking a corticosteroid as this could exacerbate fluoroquinolone-induced tendinitis and tendon rupture

Prescribe fluoroquinolones with **special caution** in the following patients as they are at higher risk of tendon injury:

- Patients over 60 years of age
- Patients with renal impairment
- Patients with solid organ transplants

Prescribe fluoroquinolones with **special caution** in the following patients:

- People with a risk of heart valve regurgitation (see Dec 2020 MHRA [Drug Safety Update](#))
- People with a risk of aortic aneurysm and dissection (see Nov 2018 MHRA [Drug Safety Update](#))

Situations where **other antibiotics are considered inappropriate** and fluoroquinolones may be indicated:

- There is resistance to other first-line antibiotics recommended for the infection
- Other first-line antibiotics are contraindicated in an individual patient
- Other first-line antibiotics have caused side effects requiring treatment to be stopped
- Treatment with other first-line antibiotics has failed

Advice for prescribers:

- Remind patients to stop the fluoroquinolone at the first sign of a serious adverse reaction, such as tendinitis or tendon rupture, muscle pain, muscle weakness, joint pain, joint swelling, peripheral neuropathy and central nervous system effects, and to contact their doctor immediately
- Offer patients a copy of the MHRA's sheet for patients ([regular print](#) or [large print](#)) for further advice
- Remain alert to the risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviours with the use of fluoroquinolones (see Sept 2023 [MHRA Drug Safety Update](#))

Medicines Safety Alerts

GP Practices have a contractual requirements to ensure they are receiving safety alerts and should ensure that they are signed up to receive all necessary alerts and that where appropriate, actions are completed as outlined by the [CQC](#). The LLR Medicines Optimisation Team will circulate safety alert information where local recommendations or actions are required based on specialist advice. Practices should not rely on this newsletter to receive all safety alerts and can register to receive them via the [MHRA](#). Medicines Supply Notification (MSN) are sent directly to GP Practices via NHSE&I (please contact england.gp-contracting@nhs.net if you are not receiving these). Additional resources practices can sign up to include the MHRA [drug safety updates](#) and [drug safety newsletter](#) and the [Medicines Supply Tool](#).

MHRA Drug Safety Update January 2024 - Valproate

New safety and educational materials have been introduced for men and women and healthcare professionals to reduce the harms from valproate, including the significant risk of serious harm to the baby if taken during pregnancy and the risk of impaired fertility in males. These safety and educational materials support the new regulatory measures announced in the National Patient Safety Alert. Further information is available at [link](#)

As previously stated, an LLR ICS multi stakeholder Task & Finish group has been configured to agree a plan and further information will be communicated to primary care in due course.

New Swallowing Difficulties guidance on NEWT Guidelines

The NEWT Guidelines team have published new Swallowing Difficulties guidance on www.newtguidelines.com.

This free-to-access section covers the management of medicines administration in patients with swallowing difficulties and those who require thickened fluids. The new section can be found in the menu on the left-hand side of the website pages.

Reminder:

LLR username and password:

- Website: access.newtguidelines.com
- Username: segment3
- Password: cabbage

Out of stock update

Please see links to the DHSC and NHSE/I online [Medicines Supply Tool](#) where you will find up to date information on out of stock medicines. The DHSC Medicines Supply team update the Medicines Supply Tool monthly. To register, please visit the [Specialist Pharmacy Service \(SPS\) website](#), you will need an NHS email address.

If a pharmacy is unable to obtain stock after following the [LLR APC Out-of-Stock-Guidance](#), an acute prescription for an available equivalent product should be prescribed. Long term supply issues may require a review of the patient and a change to their medication. Please check with your local pharmacies for up-to-date information on stock availability.

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Area Prescribing Committee (APC) Newsletter

The monthly LLR APC newsletter is designed to keep you informed of APC outcomes. All current and previous newsletters are available on the [LLR APC website](#).

LLR Medicines Optimisation Team contacts

For any queries or questions please contact the Medicines Optimisation Pharmacist supporting your practice. Alternatively you may email the Medicines Optimisation team at: llricb-llr.medicinesoptimisation@nhs.net

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