



Tablet Press

The prescribing newsletter for GPs, nurses and pharmacists in
Northamptonshire Primary Care Trust



Issue 44

May 2010

- **Community acquired *C.diff* infections compared to practice antibiotic prescribing rates**

The incidence of community acquired *C.diff* infections per GP practice has been compared with the practices' rate of antibiotic prescribing during Q2 and Q3 of 2009-10. A close correlation was found, with amber and red practices having a *C.diff* incidence rate of 25% and 56% above that of green practices, respectively.

- **Prescribing Information on Pathfinder**

Prescribing information can now be found on Pathfinder under "Therapeutics". This includes NPAG bullets, Tablet Press, clinical guidelines, formulary, traffic lights and shared care protocols, patient group directions and more.

<http://nww.pathfinder.northants.nhs.uk/> Thanks to Sue Turner and Dr James Findlay for facilitating this.

The prescribing pages on the intranet (containing the same information) are also kept up to date and can be found at

http://nww.northants.nhs.uk/Clinical_Care14070/Left_Menu/Prescribing/index.jsp

- **Generic clopidogrel agreement**

The price of generic clopidogrel has fallen to £10.90 per month (from over £30) so it is important that all prescribing is for the generic product. Prescribers and pharmacists are reminded about the countywide agreement to use generic clopidogrel for all indications.

- **Sinemet / co-careldopa supply issues**

This has been an intermittent problem for several months but the situation seems to have worsened in the last few weeks.

The stock situation partly depends on the wholesaler being used by the pharmacy / dispensing GP. As of 29th April, AAH have stock of the generic but no brand and Phoenix has neither (Unichem were not able to advise us).

Richard Glasspool, the PCT's Parkinson's Disease specialist nurse has advised the following.

- If having supply issues with branded Sinemet, change to generic co-careldopa - there should be no difference in tolerability or efficacy
- If prescribing Sinemet 62.5mg one tablet each dose, change to generic co-careldopa 25/100 and prescribe half tablet each dose
- If prescribing Sinemet 62.5mg two tablets each dose, change to generic co-careldopa 25/100 and prescribe 1 tablet each dose
- If prescribing Sinemet Plus one tablet and Sinemet 62.5mg one tablet together, then change to generic co-careldopa 25/100 and prescribe 1.5 tablets each dose
- There should be no automatic need to switch from Sinemet or co-careldopa over to Madopar or co-beneldopa at this stage as tolerability and efficacy of treatment may be different

Ideally prescriptions should be issued for the generic product.

- **NICE Bites – Hypertension/Atrial Fibrillation**

NICE Bites is a monthly bulletin which summarises key prescribing points from NICE guidance. This edition includes two clinical topics; hypertension and atrial fibrillation [\[LINK\]](#)

This edition is also available on HNN (Health Network Northants)

<http://nww.northants.nhs.uk/Display/Dynamic.jsp?topid=14070&lhsid=514&oid=2854¤tid=2854>

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