



Tablet Press

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



Issue 2

November 2006

- **Guidance on disposal of and record keeping for controlled drugs**

The Department of Health has issued final guidance on changes to record keeping for controlled drugs (CDs) and interim guidance on the destruction and disposal of CDs.

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/13/97/02/04139702.pdf>

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The link to the guidance on amendment of technical errors on CD prescriptions by pharmacists in Issue 1 of Tablet Press didn't work – apologies. Hopefully it should work this time

<http://www.pjonline.com/Editorial/20060923/society/ethics.html>

- **Discontinuation of Becotide and Becloforte inhalers**

GSK have written to healthcare professionals to inform them that Becotide and Becloforte Inhalers will be discontinued from Quarter 3 2007 and that patients will need to be transferred to alternative products over the next year. This is due to GSK being unable to secure licences for dose-equivalent CFC-free inhalers.

The county policy on inhaled steroids has been to prescribe generic beclometasone MDIs as the first-line choice and this notification from GSK does not change that advice.

We anticipate that CFC-containing generic beclometasone MDIs will remain available from a variety of generic manufacturers and if this situation changes we will advise you further at that time.

The GSK advises alternatives to Becotide and Becloforte, but there is no need to make any changes to prescribing of generic beclometasone at this time.

Please continue to prescribe generic beclometasone MDIs.

- **New Drugs from Old**

This is the title of the latest Drugs and Therapeutics bulletin, which criticises the growing practice of the pharmaceutical industry to market new formulations or derivatives of existing medicines nearing the end of their patent life. The drugs discussed include doxazosin m/r, levocetirizine, desloratadine and escitalopram, all of which are categorised in Northamptonshire as “double red” i.e. unsuitable for prescribing in either primary or secondary care. They also discuss pregabalin and esomeprazole.

For all these drugs they conclude “...such products typically offer no demonstrable clinical advantage over existing products. At best, such strategies waste NHS money. At worst, they force unnecessary change on patients...., encourage widespread use of medicines with limited safety data and waste the time of NHS staff who have to deal with the change”.

- **Sip feed prescribing**

The Prescribing and Medicines Management teams have been working with the PCT dietitians to attempt to rationalise the prescribing of sip feeds.

We will shortly be sending an information pack to all Care Homes in the county advising them of appropriate use of sip feeds and we will be sending guidance to GP practices to help with appropriate quantities and duration.

- **Oxygen**

From 31st October all oxygen supply via the FP10 route will cease as all community pharmacy oxygen contracts are being stopped nationally. The FP10 / community pharmacy route can no longer be used as a fall-back option as of now. Any serious problems with the Air Product service should be reported to the PCT and the SHA as Serious Adverse Events please, using the incident forms.

A big thank you is due to all the community pharmacists who have helped us out so admirably with oxygen supply for many years and particularly over the last few difficult months.

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

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

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