



Tablet Press



The prescribing newsletter for GPs, nurses and pharmacists
NHS Nene CCG and NHS Corby CCG

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- **MHRA safety update June 2014 – warnings on combination use of renin-angiotensin blocking agents**

The June update advises that combination use of medicines from two classes of RAS blocking agents (ACE-inhibitors, ARBs, or aliskiren) is not recommended.

- In particular, prescribers are advised not to give patients with diabetic nephropathy an ACE-inhibitor with an ARB since they are particularly prone to developing hyperkalaemia.

Patients with heart failure

- Some patients with heart failure may have a medical need for treatment with an ACE-inhibitor and an ARB. Candesartan and valsartan are licensed as add-on therapy to ACE-inhibitors for people with symptomatic heart failure who require such a combination despite optimal therapy.
- The triple combination of an ACE-inhibitor, ARB, and a mineralocorticoid receptor antagonist or other potassium-sparing diuretic is not recommended.

- **Formulary choice insulin pen needles**

Joint working between the Diabetes Multidisciplinary Team and the Prescribing and Medicines Management Team has identified GlucoRx and Omni-can as the best range of insulin pen needles at the least expensive cost. These have therefore been adopted as the local formulary choices.

- **CHADS2-VASC and HASBLED scoring on SystmOne**

The NICE CG180 on the management of Atrial Fibrillation advises that the CHADS2-VASC score should be used to estimate a patient's risk of AF and that the HASBLED score should be used to estimate their risk of bleeding, however currently the GP clinical systems only calculate the CHADS2 score.

There is a development request on SystmOne (number 55310000) to have the CHADS2 template updated to a CHADS2-VASC and a HASBLED template. SystmOne users are encouraged to support this request so that this can be put in place as soon as possible to support the implementation of the NICE CG 180.

- **Amantadine supply problem**

Alliance Pharmaceuticals have announced that due to a manufacturing delay amantadine (Symmetrel™) 100mg capsules will be temporarily out of stock. One month's stock will be available in early July with normal supply expected at the end of July 2014. We have been advised that there is no suitable alternative, but if patients do not take amantadine for a short period then, whilst this will be inconvenient, there should be minimal harm. If you have any queries please contact Debbie Quinn (Multiple Sclerosis Specialist Nurse) on 01933 235853

Debbie.Quinn@nhft.nhs.uk or Sharon Prendergast (Parkinson's Disease Nurse) on 01933 235854
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- **Vesomni**

Vesomni is a combination product containing solifenacin and tamsulosin. NPAG considered that this new combination product did not align with the implementation of the NICE CG171 and the associated Northamptonshire guidance, which promotes Neditol XL (tolterodine) as the first-line, once-daily anti-muscarinic choice for the treatment of over-active bladder. There appears to be considerable pharmaceutical representative activity promoting this product and prescribers are reminded that NPAG categorised Vesomni as double red.

- **Men C vaccination schedule**

Changes to the Men C vaccination schedule were issued on 7th May 2013. In summary the changes were to:

- remove the 2nd dose at the age of 16 weeks from the routine schedule for infants (from 1st June 2013)
- Introduce an adolescent booster at around 14 years of age (in the 2013/14 academic year).

Also there is a time limited catch-up programme to offer the vaccine to first time university entrants under the age of 25 years, i.e. those who will not have been vaccinated under the revised schedule at around 14 years.

For further information please see

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/298443/MenC_vaccine_for_new_uni_students_March2014.pdf

- **Northamptonshire guidelines for assessment and management of constipation in adults**

These guidelines have been superseded by the NICE Clinical Knowledge Summary on constipation

<http://cks.nice.org.uk/constipation>. Due to the current high cost of senna tablets, the Northamptonshire formulary choice of stimulant laxative is bisacodyl 5-10mg daily.

This edition is also available on PathfinderRF via the following link <http://nww.pathfinder-rf.northants.nhs.uk/nene>
and on the Nene CCG and Corby CCG websites

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