



- **DuoResp Spiromax inhaler – prescribe by brand**

A reminder that DuoResp should be prescribed by brand to ensure that the correct product is dispensed to the patient and that the practice budget is correctly charged. Generic scripts may be dispensed and charged as Symbicort.

- **Drugs and Driving - New Legislation**

A new offence of driving, attempting to drive, or being in charge of a vehicle with certain specified controlled drugs in excess of specified limits, is expected to come into force on 2nd March 2015. This offence is an addition to the existing rules on drug-impaired driving and fitness to drive, and applies to two groups of drugs - commonly abused drugs, including cannabis, cocaine and ketamine, and drugs used mainly for medical reasons, such as opioids and benzodiazepines. Amphetamines are also expected to be added to the legislation later in 2015.

The following guidance has been issued for healthcare professionals

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/325275/healthcare-profs-drug-driving.pdf

Patient information is available at

<http://www.mhra.gov.uk/home/groups/dsu/documents/publication/con437439.pdf>

- **Setting date and time with CareSens meters**

It is important that everyone giving out CareSens blood glucose meters reminds the patient to set the correct date and time on the meter. If this is not correct it can affect the interpretation of data for blood glucose results but also in relation to safety for driving. If help is required setting the correct date and time please ask the patient to call CareSens on 08008815423

The local blood glucose monitoring guidance can be found at

<http://www.pathfinder-rf.northants.nhs.uk/media/1614275/BGTS%20Guidelines%20Final%202012.pdf>

- **Immunisations for travel and occupational health**

NPAG have classified as “double red” all immunisations that cannot be given as an NHS service for travel or occupational health purposes. A Tablet Press Extra was circulated giving full details in August 2014 but November impact data shows a considerable number of vaccines, particularly single agent Hepatitis B, still being supplied at NHS expense.

<http://www.pathfinder-rf.northants.nhs.uk/media/2930188/medicines-for-travel-and-occ-health-tp-extra-doc.pdf>

- **DTB review of Jaydess IUS**

A review by the Drugs and Therapeutics Bulletin (January 2015) of the new levonorgestrel-releasing intra-uterine system, Jaydess, concludes that in the absence of any major advantage in terms of efficacy, safety, user acceptability or cost, there seems little reason to use it in preference to Mirena.

- **NICE bites**

The January issue of NICE Bites from UKMI summarises the NICE Clinical Guideline 191 on pneumonia. <http://www.pathfinder-rf.northants.nhs.uk/nene/therapeutics/nice-bites/>

- **Benzodiazepine use and risk of Alzheimer's disease**

A Canadian observational study found that past benzodiazepine use was associated with an increased risk of Alzheimer's disease. The study suggests that taking benzodiazepines for more than 3 months and the use of agents with longer half-lives strengthen the association, but potential biases in the study limit the conclusions that can be drawn. Prescribers should continue to follow NICE and MHRA guidance to restrict benzodiazepines to short-term use of no more than 2–4 weeks and only for specific indications. [Benzodiazepine use and risk of Alzheimer's disease](#)

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

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