



Produced by the
NHS Rotherham CCG
Medicines Management
Team

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BITE SIZE PRESCRIBING NEWSLETTER July 2016



**Rotherham
Clinical
Commissioning
Group**

Community Pharmacies: Please note, rather than referring a patient back to the prescriber when a prescribed product is unavailable; it is good practice to contact the GP practice with in-stock alternatives.



KATE'S LEAVING US!!!!

On the 16TH August we will say goodbye and good luck to our amazing senior Medicines Management technician Kate Roberts as she leaves us for pastures new.

Kate is the longest serving member of the medicines management team having started working for Rotherham PCT in 2002.

Kate started in the central locality and worked across all practices. She has seen the localities change, the PCT close and the CCG begin. Over the past five years she has facilitated the processes of change within the dietetic, wound care, stoma and continence services.

Kate has been an integral part of the Medicines Management Team and I know you will join with us to say a massive THANK YOU and good luck.

**Branded Generic of the month
(August) ZOMORPH**
MST 10mg, 30mg, 60mg, 100mg,
200mg tablets to **Zomorph Capsules.**

Chronic kidney disease: increased risk with proton pump inhibitors

An observational study found the use of proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) was associated with a 20% to 50% increased relative risk of chronic kidney disease (CKD). The increase in absolute risk was 1.7% to 3.3% over 10 years. PPIs are widely prescribed for the management of dyspepsia and gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD), and to reduce the gastrointestinal side effects of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). However, the NICE guideline on GORD and dyspepsia recommends that reviewing the need for long-term use of PPIs is important for the management of these conditions, as are more general discussions with patients about the safe and effective use of medicines (see the NICE guideline on medicines optimisation).

NICE wants people who show signs of **sepsis** to be treated with the same urgency given to those with suspected heart attacks. No matter where they work in the NHS, people need to think about the possibility of sepsis in all patients who may have an infection. Symptoms of sepsis can vary from person to person. People can get anything from a high temperature, to fast heartbeat to a fever or chills. It can often be mistaken for common infections like flu. The guideline advocates responsible use of antibiotics. Antibiotics should only be given to the sickest people if they meet the high-risk criteria set out in the guideline.

Suspected drug interaction between citalopram and cocaine

When prescribing selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), prescribers are reminded to enquire about cocaine use when considering drug-drug interactions and the need to avoid concurrent use of multiple serotonergic drugs. A coroners case has raised concerns about a suspected drug interaction between citalopram and cocaine which resulted in death due to subarachnoid haemorrhage. There are plausible mechanisms for an interaction between cocaine and citalopram that could lead to subarachnoid haemorrhage, including hypertension related to cocaine and an additive increased bleeding risk in combination with citalopram.

Nitrofurantoin tablets are now cheaper than capsules!

The drug tariff price for Nitrofurantoin capsules has increased dramatically, following the discontinuation of Macrobid and Macrodantin. This means that it is now **much cheaper to prescribe tablets**, where capsules had previously been better value. Capsules do have a better side effect profile than tablets but due to the financial constraints on the NHS we can't ignore the cost savings! We will be altering the prescribing "pop ups" to reflect this change as most prescribing will be acute to help remind you of this change.

Drug Tariff prices July 2016: 50mg caps £14.39 vs tabs £7.50 (28) 100mg caps £9.73 vs tabs £2.46 (28)



Vitamin D Self Care



Vitamin D has been in the news again following the publication of a review undertaken by the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN). The report recommends that everyone over the age of one needs to consume 10 micrograms of vitamin D each day in order to protect bone and muscle health. They recognise that it may be difficult to achieve from diet and sunlight alone, and that in winter months (October-March) people should consider using vitamin D supplements (1).

This report echoes similar findings from across Europe. In Germany 60% of the population is Vitamin D deficient and has serum levels below 50nmol/l; with 15% of the population having levels below 25nmol/l (2) similar results were found in the Netherlands, Switzerland and studies from Denmark observed that vitamin D levels were insufficient in 50-90% of the study population during the winter(3). A health survey in England in 2010 involving 2070 people aged over 65 living in private households reported that only 16% of men and 13% of women met the recommended serum vitamin D level $\geq 75\text{nmol/l}$. (4).

NHS Rotherham CCG spent **£756,326** on Vitamin D preparations in 2015-16, this is an 85% increase over a four year period. With Vitamin D deficiency being so widespread in the community it is not sustainable to offer vitamin D supplements to the majority of the population on prescription and patients will therefore need to be directed to self-care.

A quick bit of market research undertaken during the weekend of 23rd-24th July 2016 in town centres across South Yorkshire by the NHS Rotherham CCG Medicines Management Team confirmed that vitamin D supplements are widely available and affordable

Shop	Qty	Strength	Cost	Cost per day	Cost per 30 days	
Morrisons	90	12mcg	£2.46	2.47p/day	£0.82	
Tesco	90	12.5mcg	£2.75	3.06p/day	£1.02	3 for 2 offer
Boots	90	10mcg	£2.19	2.43p/day	£0.73	3 for 2 offer
Holland&Barrett	60	10mcg	£3.19	5.31p/day	£1.60	
Asda	60	25mcg	£2.00	3.33p/day	£1.00	
Sainsburys	90	25mcg	£2.00	2.22p/day	£0.67	
Weldricks	60	25mcg	£0.75	1.25p/day	£0.38	
Lloyds	90	25mcg	£3.99	4.43p/day	£1.33	Buy 1 get 2nd half price
Wilko	90	12.5mcg	£1.45	1.61p/day	£0.48	
Bargin Buys	60	12.5mcg	£1.00	1.67p/day	£0.50	
Poundland	90	10mcg	£1.00	1.11p/day	£0.33	
Waitrose	60	25mcg	£3.09	3.01p/day	£0.90	3 for 2 offer

It should be noted that multivitamins are available at similar costs but usually only contain 5mcg of vitamin D.

Vitamin D on prescriptions in 2015-16 cost NHS Rotherham CCG somewhere between £7.25 & £9.76 each prescription.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

