

Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Guidance

Issue: 128

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Safety guidance

LFPSE (Learning from patient safety events) – Reminder

National Patient Safety Event data shows that reporting of events via LFPSE remains low amongst Primary Care Providers, comprising of only 0.7% of all incident reporting in Quarter 3 (October to December 2025). [LINK](#)

Practices are reminded to register and maintain an account with LFPSE; this requirement supports the [Primary Care Patient Safety strategy](#) and contributes to a national NHS data source aimed at fostering learning, improvement, and a culture of safety.

- Primary care information on the national LFPSE service: [LINK](#)
- To register and/or record a patient safety incident via LFPSE: [LINK](#)

Prevention of Future Death Reports (Regulation 28) – Shared learning

Fentanyl patch toxicity: [LINK](#)

Wendy had been prescribed fentanyl patches and codeine for chronic pain since 2011, following an accident and amputation of her arm.

Wendy was found deceased at home, where she was found to have TWO fentanyl patches on her body. Post-mortem examination found that she had a toxic level of fentanyl in her system, with codeine adding to the toxicity.

- Practices are reminded of the importance of explaining patch application to patients when prescribing opioid pain patches.
- Instructions to remove the old patch before applying a new patch should be clearly explained and noted in the dose directions.
- Default dose instructions for SystmOne practices using the HIOW SystmOne formulary have been updated to include these instructions.

This case highlights the significant challenges faced by the NHS in reducing long-term opioid use. Further resources to support practices in the safer management and prescribing of opioids for chronic, non-cancer pain can be found on the HIOW ICB website. [LINK](#)

Simvastatin & Clarithromycin interaction: [LINK](#)

Lyn was prescribed clarithromycin for a chest infection while taking simvastatin for high cholesterol. Lyn was not told to stop taking her statin, either by the GP or dispensing pharmacy.

Lyn was admitted to hospital but was not asked about co-ingestion of simvastatin and clarithromycin. She deteriorated and a diagnosis of rhabdomyolysis was missed; she died from a cardiac arrest due to hyperkalaemia.

- Practices are reminded that clarithromycin is contraindicated with simvastatin
- If clarithromycin is essential to use, simvastatin should be stopped whilst the patient is taking the course of clarithromycin.

Further resources to support practices in managing interactions between macrolides and statins are available on the Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) website. [LINK](#)
Information on antibiotic prescribing, including local SCAN (South Coast Antimicrobial Network) guidelines can be found on the Eolas website. [LINK](#)

Local guidance

Denosumab Prescribing in the Treatment of Osteoporosis and Fracture Prevention [LINK](#)

These guidelines include updated advice regarding calcium, vitamin D and renal function testing.

Chronic Pain Prescribing Guidelines [LINK](#)

These new guidelines have been developed to facilitate appropriate prescribing in primary care for adults presenting with chronic (persistent), non-malignant, non-palliative pain. The guidelines include prescribing information for simple and topical analgesics, opioids, antidepressants, neuropathic agents and cannabis and cannabis related products.

Penicillin Allergy & De-labelling guidelines [LINK](#)

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Prescribing Committee has endorsed the Penicillin Allergy and De-labelling guidance produced by the Wessex Allergy Network.

This guideline provides a framework for healthcare professionals *without* specialist knowledge in allergy, working in primary and secondary care, to address potentially inaccurate penicillin allergy labels in their *paediatric* practice.

Please see the link above for the PIER network.

Triptan Prescribing Guide for Migraine (Adults) [LINK](#)

These new guidelines provide advice on choice of triptans available and alternative triptans to prescribe depending on side effects experienced by patients before moving to Rimegepant. The updated HIOW Rimegepant Prescribing information sheet is available on the HIOW ICB website. [LINK](#)

Vitamin B12 deficiency – ICB implementation guidance [LINK](#)

This guidance provides advice on when to check B12 levels based on the patients' symptoms and provides information on how to interpret the results. This guidance should be used in conjunction with the NICE guideline for Vitamin B12 deficiency in over 16s: diagnosis and management. [LINK](#)

Oral Vitamin K (Phytomenadione) Prescribing for High INRs in Adults in Primary Care [LINK](#)

This leaflet is intended to provide information and guidance for primary care, on the indications, treatment regimens and practicalities of supply of vitamin K in the community. Due to differences in service provision for the monitoring and management of warfarin across the ICB, the provision of vitamin K for high INRs varies as detailed below. Please see the link above for further details.

Spironolactone for Acne in Women [LINK](#)

Spironolactone is now classified as green on the Hampshire and Isle of Wight (IOW) formulary for treating acne in female patients. [LINK](#)

A prescribing information document has been produced by Dr Alexa Shipman (Consultant Dermatologist, Portsmouth Hospital University NHS Trust) to support prescribers in primary care looking to initiate treatment for their patients.

Formulary updates

A full list of formulary updates can be found on the HIOW formulary page: [LINK](#)

- **Rivaroxaban 10mg tablets** have been added to the formulary for use in SVT as a Red medicine for all trusts. [LINK](#)
- **Rivastigmine (Zeyzef®) (twice-weekly) patches** are now Amber Recommended on the formulary following the supply shortage of the once-daily patches.

Care is needed when switching between once daily and twice weekly to avoid the risk of dosing error. Clinicians should educate patient/carer on the application frequency and technique – especially if switching to/from the daily patch. Education material, including application diary is available at <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/rmm/2808/Document>

NICE guidelines

Kidney cancer: diagnosis and management – guidance (NG256) [LINK](#)

This guideline covers diagnosing and managing renal cell carcinoma in people aged 18 and over. It aims to improve care by helping healthcare professionals offer people the right treatments and support, taking into account the person's individual preferences.

Blood transfusion - updated guideline (NG24) [LINK](#)

Guideline updated to include new recommendations on using tranexamic acid to prevent bleeding during surgery, following a review of the evidence. The committee agreed it is safe at typical doses stated in the recommendations, and is generally clinically and cost effective.

Fertility problems: assessment and treatment - guidance (NG257) [LINK](#)

This guideline partially updates and replaces NICE guideline CG156 (published 2013). Recommendations on hypothalamic-pituitary-ovarian dysfunction (predominantly PCOS) have been removed as NICE is developing a guideline on polycystic ovary syndrome.

Menopause: identification and management- updated guidance (NG23) [LINK](#)

New recommendation (1.8.5) added to note there is limited evidence for people who experience unscheduled vaginal bleeding while on sequential or continuous HRT. The British Menopause Society has published guidance on unscheduled bleeding on HRT.

Other

The Menopause Optimal Pathway Toolkit (OPT) [LINK](#)

The toolkit provides comprehensive support to help all non-specialist clinicians to improve patient outcomes. It has also been designed to help support women through the menopause, using the best NICE-compliant evidence available.

Remind patients to carry their emergency card for Addison's disease

Following two Prevention of Future Deaths reports received by NHS England, work is taking place to seek the support of GPs and healthcare professionals to remind patients with Addison's disease of the importance of carrying their [Steroid Emergency Card](#). This card is used to inform healthcare professionals, such as ambulance staff, that their medication cannot be stopped in circumstances where they are unable to communicate their health problems effectively.

Steroid Emergency Cards can be ordered from [PCSE online](#) or from [NHS Forms, Print, Exemptions, Cards and EIHC](#).

Patients with Addison's disease should have their emergency plan written into their Universal Care Plan, where this is used. Further information can be found on [NHS England's website](#) and [NICE's website](#).

Genomics

Pharmacogenomic Resource [LINK](#)

The RPS has launched this open access resource supporting prescribers to build and expand pharmacogenomics (PGx) competence, helping them to prescribe safely and effectively using PGx, ultimately improving patient outcomes through medicines optimisation.

Handbook of Pharmacogenomics [LINK](#)

The UKCPA have launched the Handbook of Pharmacogenomics as a free online resource. It is endorsed by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and British Pharmacological Society and supported by the Royal College of General Practitioners.

The handbook offers healthcare professionals evidence-based advice and guidance on drugs in a simple and easy-to-use format, which covers:

- the impact of genetic variation on response to therapy
- testing recommendations
- therapeutic recommendations

- along with additional drug-specific information

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Local medicines optimisation teams can be contacted via their generic team mailbox: See [LINK](#)

Previous bulletins can be found hosted on the ICS website here: [LINK](#)