

# Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Guidance

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## 1. New local Hampshire and Isle of Wight COPD guidelines

The new HIOW COPD guidelines are now available on the GP portal: [COPD Management and Prescribing Guidance 2022](#) . This link takes you to the set of guidelines that have a Southampton City specific referral criteria box. We are hoping to have additional versions to include referral criteria for other areas available shortly. The rest of the guideline is the same for all areas. Please take some time to familiarise yourself with the new guidelines as they are very different to previous versions. The important message remains that **assessing inhaler technique** and **selecting the right device for the patient** is paramount. Information regarding the carbon footprint of the devices is included in these guidelines and there will be further information shortly about a project offer to help practices embed these new guidelines into use in your practice.

## 2. MHRA: Pregabalin (Lyrica): findings of safety study on risks during pregnancy [LINK](#)

A new study has suggested pregabalin may slightly increase the risk of major congenital malformations if used in pregnancy. Patients should continue to use effective contraception during treatment and avoid use in pregnancy unless clearly necessary. A patient safety leaflet has been produced by the MHRA and is available here: [LINK](#)

## 3. NICE: Medicines associated with dependence or withdrawal symptoms: safe prescribing and withdrawal management for adults- guidance (NG215) [LINK](#)

This guideline covers general principles for prescribing and managing withdrawal from opioids, benzodiazepines, gabapentinoids, Z-drugs and antidepressants in primary and secondary care.

## 4. NICE: Stroke and transient ischaemic attack in over 16s: diagnosis and initial management – updated guidance (NG128) [LINK](#)

Recommendations on blood pressure (BP) control in acute intracerebral haemorrhage have been updated. Among other points, rapid BP lowering should be considered for

systolic blood pressure 150-220 mmHg beyond 6 hours of symptom onset, unless certain exclusion criteria are present.

## **5. NICE: Epilepsies in children, young people and adults- guidance (NG217) ([Link](#))**

This guideline covers diagnosing & managing epilepsy in children, young people & adults in primary & secondary care, and referral to tertiary services. It aims to improve diagnosis and treatment for different seizure types and syndromes and reduce risks for people with epilepsy.

For guidance as to when to prescribe antiepileptic drugs by brand or as a specific manufacturer's product, please refer to the MHRA guidance dated 2017 ; [Antiepileptic drugs: updated advice on switching between different manufacturers' products - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## **6. Local palliative care guidelines: Mountbatten Hospices**

The Palliative Care Handbook- Wessex 2019 provides advice on palliative care across the Wessex area ([LINK](#)) and has been ratified for use locally by all prescribing committees across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

However, prescribers should also be aware that specialists based at the Mountbatten Hampshire (formerly Countess Mountbatten Hospice ), may sometimes also refer to the Mountbatten Isle of Wight Palliative Care Symptom Control Guidelines ([LINK](#)) and use these to provide guidance.

## **7. New Open Prescribing comparison data; Edoxaban**

In January 2022 the NHS in England announced a national procurement programme for DOACs ([LINK](#)), which states:

- For patients commencing treatment for AF: subject to the criteria specified in the relevant NICE technology appraisal guidance, clinicians should use edoxaban where this is clinically appropriate. If edoxaban is contraindicated or not clinically appropriate for the specific patient then, subject to the criteria specified in the relevant NICE technology appraisal guidance, clinicians should then consider rivaroxaban first, then apixaban or dabigatran.

For the new comparative data, via Open Prescribing see [LINK](#)

## **8. Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) for Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)**

SSPs have been issued for three HRT medicines:

- Oestroge<sup>l</sup>® pump-pack 750mcg/actuation gel - SSP019
- Ovestin<sup>®</sup> 1mg cream - SSP020

- Premique® low dose 0.3mg/1.5mg modified release tablets - SSP021

The SSPs will enable community pharmacists in the UK to supply patients with no more than three months' supply of medicine. These are now available to view on the NHS Business Service Authority (BSA)'s dedicated SSP web page, along with supporting guidance. The SSPs came into effect on 29 April 2022 and are currently due to expire on Friday 29 July 2022. Should this change, the SSPs will be updated accordingly and published on this page.

If you have any questions regarding the SSPs please contact the NHS Prescription Service:

Email: [nhsbsa.prescriptionservices@nhsbsa.nhs.uk](mailto:nhsbsa.prescriptionservices@nhsbsa.nhs.uk)

Telephone: 0300 330 1349

Textphone: 18001 0300 330 1349

To access the latest information about SSPs (including supporting guidance), please visit the following link – <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/serious-shortage-protocols-ssps>.”

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*Previous bulletins can be found at: <https://gp-portal.westhampshireccg.nhs.uk/medicines/covid-19-medicines-information/covid-19-medicines-optimisation-bulletins/>*