

# Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Guidance

Issue: 99

Date: 28 March 2024

## Safety guidance

### 1. New: Tramadol and warfarin interaction

A UK coroner has issued a prevention of future deaths (regulation 28) report [LINK](#) after a patient stable on warfarin was additionally prescribed tramadol and sadly died as a result of a bleed in the brain. The patient had an INR of almost twelve times the normal level when admitted to hospital.

The tramadol / warfarin interaction has now been added to the BNF: severity-severe, evidence-anecdotal. Previously, this was a relatively unknown interaction but could be found in tramadol's summary of product characteristics. The SmPC for tramadol states: caution should be exercised during concomitant treatment with tramadol and coumarin derivatives (e.g. warfarin) due to reports of increased INR with major bleedings and ecchymoses in some patients. Prescribers of anticoagulants should be aware of this recently highlighted information.

### 2. Reminder: SGLT2 inhibitors and Fournier's gangrene [LINK](#)

The MHRA released a drug safety update in 2019 which discussed post-marketing cases of Fournier's gangrene (necrotising fasciitis of the genitalia or perineum) as they had been associated with the use of sodium-glucose co-transporter 2 (SGLT2) inhibitors.

Fournier's gangrene is a rare but serious and potentially life-threatening infection. If Fournier's gangrene is suspected; stop the SGLT2 inhibitor, refer immediately for surgical admission and antibiotics. Urogenital infection or perineal abscess may precede necrotising fasciitis. Patients are advised to seek urgent medical attention if they experience severe pain, tenderness, erythema, or swelling in the genital or perineal area, accompanied by fever or malaise.

For further details and the full drug safety alert, please see the link above.

## Local guidance

### 3. Denosumab prescribing in the treatment of osteoporosis and fracture prevention [LINK](#)

The ICB guidance for denosumab prescribing in primary care has been updated:

- Risk factors for fractures amended to include:
  - Prolonged oral steroid use
  - History of hip fractures <60 yrs
  - Inflammatory arthritis
  - Endocrine causes

- Patient groups who may be unsuitable for denosumab updated to include those with a history of hypocalcaemia in the previous 2 years.
- Reasons to discontinue denosumab amended to stopping after the first two injections rather than the initial injection.

#### **4. Tirzepatide injection (Mounjaro®) [LINK](#)**

Please note tirzepatide injections have been added to the formulary and will be available on the prescribing systems as soon as they are updated.

#### **5. Shared care guidelines [LINK](#)**

The ICS has produced system-wide shared care guidelines for DMARDs and ADHD medicines which will be available on the link above from the 1 April 2024.

### **National guidance**

#### **6. NHSE policy guidance: conditions for which over the counter items should not be routinely prescribed in primary care [LINK](#)**

The updated guidance provides recommendations for items available over the counter that should not be prescribed in primary care. It aims to reduce unwarranted variation, improve patient outcomes and provide value for money for the NHS.

#### **7. NHSE Measles guidance for primary, community care, emergency departments and hospital [LINK](#)**

Latest guidance from NHSE on diagnosis, assessment and management of measles. This includes details on prescribing and supply of immunoglobulin for measles post-exposure prophylaxis following risk assessment.

#### **8. UKHSA National measles guidelines - update to measles post exposure prophylaxis section [LINK](#)**

This guidance details how to manage cases of suspected measles: what patient details to take, who to notify and assessing risk of disease spreading in close contacts.

### **NICE guidelines**

#### **9. Vitamin B12 deficiency in over 16s: diagnosis and management - guidance (NG239) [LINK](#)**

This new guideline covers recognising, diagnosing and managing vitamin B12 deficiency in people aged 16 and over, including deficiency caused by autoimmune gastritis. It also covers monitoring for gastric cancer in people with autoimmune gastritis. A helpful two-page visual summary is available on ongoing care and follow-up options for oral and intramuscular vitamin B12 replacement. [LINK](#)

## **10. Meningitis (bacterial) and meningococcal disease: recognition, diagnosis and management – guidance (NG240) [LINK](#)**

Guideline covers recognising, diagnosing and managing bacterial meningitis and meningococcal disease in babies, children, young people and adults. It aims to reduce death and disability by helping healthcare professionals recognise meningitis and treat it quickly and effectively.

## **11. Ovarian cancer: identifying and managing familial and genetic risk - guidance (NG241) [LINK](#)**

This guideline covers assessing the familial and genetic risk of having a pathogenic variant associated with ovarian cancer in adults.

## **Other**

### **12. Upcoming Health Innovation Wessex polypharmacy events:**

- **Polypharmacy Action Learning Sets**

Registrations now open – multiple dates April – July

<https://www.healthinnwest.net/event/polypharmacy-action-learning-sets-3/>

This online interactive course is held over three half days (9:30 - 12pm) and is aimed at GPs and primary care clinicians with a minimum of 12 months' prescribing experience:

- **Reducing opioids for chronic, non-cancer pain masterclass- Join us for this opioid prescribing masterclass to understand how to tackle this issue in your Primary Care Network or GP Practice.**

16 May 2024: 12 – 1.30pm: <https://WessexopioidsmasterclassMay24.eventbrite.co.uk>

- **Wessex Managing antidepressants in older people masterclass- Join us to understand more about the use of antidepressants in older people and how to safely stop them.**

20 June 2024: 12 - 1.30pm: <https://WessexAntidepressants20June24.eventbrite.co.uk>

**Prepared by Anita Bhardwaj, Sue Wakelin and Dr Emma Harris**

**On behalf of Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB Medicines Optimisation Teams**

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](#)*