

Our Ref: DC/NB

17th July 2023

To: Prescribing Clinicians and Pharmacists within the Barnsley locality

Dear Colleague

Re: GLP-1 receptor agonist shortage and summary of associated key points from Barnsley Area Prescribing Committee meeting 12th July 2023

Clinicians will be aware that there is an ongoing national shortage of GLP-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1 RAs) used in the management of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus as detailed in the [MSN](#) published on the 27th June 2023. This situation is not expected to resolve until at least mid-2024 and supplies may be intermittent or exhausted during this time.

Key messages from the national guidance and/or Barnsley APC:

- **No new patients should be started** on a GLP-1 RA for the duration of the supply issues.
- **Avoid switching** between brands of GLP-1 RAs, including between injectable and oral forms.
- Where a higher dose preparation of GLP-1 RA is not available, **do not substitute by doubling up** a lower dose preparation.
- GLP-1 RAs should **only be prescribed for their licensed indication**.
- Review the need for prescribing of a GLP-1 receptor agonist and stop treatment if no longer required due to not achieving desired clinical effect as per NICE NG28 (i.e. a reduction of at least 11 mmol/mol [1.0%] in HbA1c and weight loss of at least 3% of initial body weight after 6 months).
- Where GLP-1 RA therapy is not available, proactively identify patients established on the affected preparation and consider prioritising for review based on the [MSN](#) and the GLP-1 RA National Shortage Guidance produced jointly by the Primary Care Diabetes Society and Association of British Clinical Diabetologists ([PCDS/ABCD guidance](#)).
- Where there is reduced access to GLP-1 RAs, support people with type 2 diabetes to access to structured education and weight management programmes where available.
- The Barnsley Area Prescribing Committee recommends that:
 - quantities of GLP-1 RAs prescribed during the shortage do not exceed a 28 day supply where possible.
 - patients are encouraged to order their medication 10 days in advance of running out.

Clinical Review

In most cases, the need to consider alternative glucose lowering therapy will arise when a person with T2DM established on GLP-1 RA therapy is unable to source their regular prescription.

Should a particular preparation of GLP-1 RA be unavailable, clinical teams may want to proactively identify people with T2DM established on that preparation to help planning.

Consider prioritising review for people with T2DM on the affected GLP-1 RA preparation where:

- HbA1c greater than 86mmol/mol in the previous 3 to 6 months.
- HbA1c greater than 86mmol/mol prior to starting the GLP1-RA.
- HbA1c not recorded in the previous 6 months.
- Urine albumin creatinine ratio (uACR) greater than 30mg/mmol.
- Self-monitoring glucose readings (or Continuous Glucose Monitoring, where available) are persistently above individualised target range.

Where an alternative glucose lowering therapy needs to be considered, use principles of shared decision making as per [NICE NG 197 \(shared decision making\)](#) in conjunction with [NICE NG28 \(T2DM in adults\)](#) (please also note [Visual Summary](#) and [Patient Decision Aid](#)), [joint PCDS/ABCD guidance](#) and the supporting information in the [MSN](#).

Additional information

- Stock updates and other supporting resources can be accessed via the Medicines Supply Tool on the Specialist Pharmacy Service website [[SPS](#) - log in required, can register with NHS email address]. The Medicines Management Team will also be collating local intelligence on stock availability.
- Clinical system searches have been produced to support in identifying patients for review. Please liaise with the Medicines Management Team member(s) in your practice to discuss how the team can offer support in identifying patients:
 - in the above priority groups
 - prescribed quantities exceeding 28 days supply
 - prescribed a GLP-1 RA for an off label indication
 - who have not had a beneficial metabolic response (as defined by NICE)
- A GLP-1 RA shortage update webinar with specialists from South Yorkshire is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 19th July 12.30pm – 1.30pm (further details and registration available [here](#)).

Further updates will be provided in due course as and when additional information becomes available.

If you require information or advice in the interim please contact a member of the Medicines Management Team.

Kind Regards



Deborah Cooke
Lead Pharmacist

cc: Medicines Management Team Barnsley Place
Rebecca Hoskins, BHNFT
Nisha Pounj-Taylor, BHNFT
Sarah Hudson, SWYPFT
Area Prescribing Committee Members (Secretary to the APC to circulate)
Local Medical Committee (Secretary to the LMC to circulate)
Dr Elizabeth Uchegbu, BHNFT
Kerry Burns, BHNFT
Alex Molyneux, Chief Pharmacy Officer, South Yorkshire ICB
Heidi Taylor, South Yorkshire ICB (Sheffield)
Charlotte McMurray, South Yorkshire ICB (Doncaster)
Stuart Lakin, South Yorkshire ICB (Rotherham)