

Medicines Management Newsletter

August 2021

Welcome to the August edition of the Medicines Management Newsletter, we hope that you are all keeping safe and well during this time. This newsletter is distributed to all practices and pharmacies in the Barnsley area and aims to keep you informed of the latest medicine updates, drug alerts/recalls and the work currently being completed in GP Practices by the Medicines Management Team.

Medicines Optimisation Scheme (MOS) 2021-22

Eclipse Live: RADAR Reviews

Review of Eclipse RADAR alerts will continue to help identify patients may be at a higher clinical risk and at increased risk of hospital admission.

The alerts are currently split into three categories:

1. Admission Avoidance – red, amber and blue
2. Monitoring – red, amber and blue
3. Prescribing Safety alerts (purple)

Previously, practices have been required to review categories 1 & 2, however it has been acknowledged that there would be substantial benefits in reviewing the 3rd category of alerts too.

Medicines Optimisation Scheme 21/22 criteria:

The practice will be signed up to Eclipse Live software; run RADAR reports a minimum of once a week and prioritise for review the patients identified to be at the highest clinical risk:

- 100% of Barnsley red admission avoidance and monitoring high priority alerts to be reviewed at least once every 1 to 2 weeks
- A minimum of 75% of purple alerts every 1 to 2 weeks, in practices where PINCER reporting reviews are not undertaken
- A minimum of 50% of Barnsley admission avoidance and monitoring amber alerts and 25% of blue alerts to be reviewed every 1 to 2 weeks

Eclipse High Cost Drug review

As part of the Medicines Optimisation Scheme, the practice is also required to complete a review of High Cost drug data (items over £200) available via the Eclipse Solutions website for their practice over a recent 6 month period. Patients will be reviewed to ensure prescribing is appropriate and in line with local guidance. Guidance has been circulated to MMT members and the reviews will be completed by the MMT members working in each practice.

The CCG Medicines Management Team is happy to support practices in these and other areas, however please note that the overall responsibility for completion of the work within the scheme lies entirely with the practice.

Any queries can be sent to the Medicines Management Team via email address Barnsleyccg.mosreporting@nhs.net or by calling the team office on 01226 433798.

Nutrition: Fat Emulsion Prescribing

Fat emulsions are low volume, calorie dense oral nutritional supplements (ONS). The fat emulsion products currently on the Joint Barnsley Formulary include:

- Calogen®
- ProCal® Shot
- Fresubin® 5kcal Shot
- Calogen® Extra

NHS Barnsley CCG does not recommend prescribing fat emulsions for the routine treatment of malnutrition.

Fat emulsions should only be prescribed at the request of a dietitian for patients who meet ONS prescribing criteria AND one of the exemption criteria below:

- Enterally fed tube patients requiring additional calories in a compatible liquid form to meet their calculated requirements.
- Specific medical conditions such as renal, metabolic, malabsorption, complex paediatric, and other specialist disorders that require a nutrient-specific diet e.g. ketogenic.
- Alternative products* are unsuitable for dietary, cultural and/or religious beliefs.

* For more information regarding alternative products and the appropriate prescribing of fat emulsions, please refer to the 'Primary Care Prescribing Guidance: Fat Emulsions for the Purpose of Oral Nutrition Support'

<https://best.barnsleyccg.nhs.uk/clinical-support/medicines/prescribing-guidelines/Fat%20Emulsion%20Guidance.pdf>

Patient Group Directions Update

Yorkshire and the Humber Screening and Immunisation Team emailed out the following updated PGD to Practice Managers on 22.07.2021:

- Meningococcal group A, C, W and Y (MenACWY) conjugate vaccine (valid from 01.07.2021)

Practice Managers are asked to share the PGD with all practitioners planning to work under it and to ensure individual practitioner authorisation.

The PGD is available on the NHSE website along with all other current PGDs:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/north-east-yorkshire/our-work/information-for-professionals/pgds/>

If Practice Managers do not receive emails about updated PGDs from the Screening and Immunisation Team please email: joanne.howlett2@nhs.net or joypower@nhs.net (Medicines Management Pharmacists) and this can be arranged.

C. Difficile First Line Antibiotic Treatment

Oral vancomycin 125mg QDS is the first line antibiotic for confirmed cases of C. Difficile in adults.

[NICE Guidance \(NG199, July 2021\)](#) recommends a **10 day course** of vancomycin and the primary care antimicrobial guidance is in the process of being updated in line with this. Specialist advice should be sought from a Consultant Microbiologist in the case of relapse, second line options, management of C Difficile ribotype 027 and if there is no clinical response to first line treatment after 5 days.

Existing antibiotics should be reviewed and stopped unless essential. If an antibiotic is still essential, consider changing to one with a lower risk of causing C. Difficile infection. Review the need to continue any treatment with PPIs, other medicines with GI activity or adverse effects (such as laxatives) and medicines that may cause problems if people are dehydrated (e.g. NSAIDs, ACEIs/A2RAs and diuretics).

Primary care antimicrobial guidance can be accessed on the BEST website: <https://best.barnsleyccg.nhs.uk/clinical-support/medicines/prescribing->

Flu Season Planning 2021-22

The additional Investment and Impact Fund (IIF) flu vaccine indicators and increased thresholds, together with the many other pressures in the system, are expected to make this a particularly challenging flu season.

The table below gives an outline of the national targets and IIF thresholds:

	65 and Over	At Risk Adults	50-64 (and not in another at risk group)	School-Aged Children	Pre-School Children Aged 2 or 3 years
National Target	85%	75%	75%	70%	70%
IIF Upper Threshold	86%	90%	N/A	N/A	82%
IIF Lower Threshold	80%	57%	N/A	N/A	45%

The increased targets and addition of the 50-64 age group will make community pharmacy support more important than ever this year. As stated in guidance received earlier this year, community pharmacy is anticipated to play a large role in vaccinating the 50-64 age group.

With this in mind, and to enable us to identify potential ways that we may be able to support practices to meet the IIF thresholds, we are in the process of collating information from GP practices and community pharmacies regarding plans for the upcoming flu season.

Thank you to practices who have already responded to this request and to pharmacies who have already expressed a willingness to support where needed.

Flu Vaccination Cohort Searches 2021-22

The searches for practices to identify patients who are eligible for a flu vaccination in the 2021-22 season have now been published onto the clinical systems.

SystemOne searches can be found in the 'YHCS (Barnsley, Bassetlaw, Sheffield)' folder under 'Flu Reports 2021 to 2022 v1.0'

EMIS searches have been published into EMIS Enterprise and will need copying into your own system before being run. They can be found in:

Barnsley CCG Report Library -> Clinical Apps and Data Quality -> Flu Reports 2021 to 2022 v1.0

If you have any queries regarding the searches please contact the Medicines Management Team.

Support to Community Pharmacies

As part of the CCG's continued effort to support community pharmacies, brief check-in calls will continue to be made to see how community pharmacists and their teams are managing through these challenging times. The calls are an opportunity for community pharmacies to raise any issues or concerns they may have.

Pharmacies are advised to flag any significant issues or concerns as soon as possible and do not need to wait for the next call.

Disruptions to communication methods (phone lines/email)

Should any community pharmacies experience disruption to their lines of communication can they please bring these to our attention, wherever possible.

The team can be contacted by email:

- Shoab Ashfaq, Primary Care Network Clinical Pharmacist - s.ashfaq@nhs.net
- Mir Khan, Primary Care Network Clinical Pharmacist – mir.khan1@nhs.net
- Danny Speight, Medicines Management Technician - daniel.speight1@nhs.net

MHRA Safety Updates

The latest MHRA safety updates are available to view online.

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1011467/Aug-2021-DSU-PDF.pdf

Key issues affecting Primary Care are highlighted below - For the full details please view the guidance using the link above.

Desogestrel-containing contraceptive pills: reclassification decisions by the MHRA

In July 2021, the MHRA agreed to [reclassify 2 desogestrel-containing progestogen-only oral contraceptives](#) (Hana 75 microgram, [Lovima 75 microgram](#)) from prescription-only (POM) to pharmacy (P) products for the prevention of pregnancy in women of childbearing age. The MHRA's decision to reclassify these desogestrel products follows a safety review by the Commission on Human Medicines (CHM) and public consultation.

See [Hana public assessment report](#) and [Lovima public assessment report](#).

COVID-19 vaccines: updates for August 2021

Recent information relating to COVID-19 vaccines that has been published since the July 2021 issue of Drug Safety Update.

Review of reports involving menstrual disorders and unexpected vaginal bleeding

The MHRA is reviewing, with expert advice, reports of suspected side effects of menstrual disorders and unexpected vaginal bleeding following vaccination against COVID-19 in the UK

The menstrual changes reported are mostly transient in nature. There is no evidence to suggest that COVID-19 vaccines will affect fertility and the ability to have children. It is important that anyone experiencing changes to their periods that are unusual for them, persist over time, or has any new vaginal bleeding after the menopause, following COVID-19 vaccination, should contact their doctor. Anyone presenting with menstrual disorders and/or unexpected vaginal bleeding following COVID-19 vaccination should be treated according to clinical guidelines for these conditions, as usual.

The MHRA continues to closely review reports of suspected side effects of menstrual disorders and unexpected vaginal bleeding. As with any suspected side effects from the COVID-19 vaccines, please continue to report via the Yellow Card scheme. You can also encourage your patients to do the same.

Safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy

Further information has also been included in [the summary of Yellow Card reporting for the COVID-19 vaccines](#) as the MHRA continues to closely monitor the safety of COVID-19 vaccine exposures in pregnancy, including Yellow Card reports for COVID-19 vaccines used in pregnancy.

The MHRA will continue to closely monitor safety data for use of the COVID-19 vaccines in pregnancy, including through evaluation of electronic healthcare record data.

Summaries of Yellow Card reporting and other recent MHRA publications

We continue to publish the summaries of the [Yellow Card reporting for the COVID-19 vaccines](#) being used in the UK.

The report summarises information received via the Yellow Card scheme and will be published regularly to include other safety investigations carried out by the MHRA under the [COVID-19 Vaccine Surveillance Strategy](#).

We have also recently:

- updated the information about the [COVID-19 Vaccine Pfizer/BioNTech](#) for healthcare professionals and recipients to include additional descriptions of anxiety-related reactions, extensive swelling of the vaccinated limb, and facial swelling in people with facial dermatological fillers (see also information in [summary of Yellow Card reporting](#))
- [added a lay summary for Vaxzevria COVID-19 Vaccine \(previously COVID 19 Vaccine AstraZeneca, suspension for injection\)](#)
- published the [Summary of Product Information](#), [Patient Information Leaflet](#) and [Conditions](#) document for the GB Conditional Marketing Authorisation for the [Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine](#)

We have previously provided summaries of the latest COVID-19 information, including in the [May 2021](#), [June 2021](#), and [July 2021](#) issues of Drug Safety Update.

See [guidance on COVID-19 for all our latest information](#), including after publication of this article

If you have any queries regarding medication or require support in identifying patients affected by any of the issues discussed in this newsletter, please contact the Medicines Management Pharmacist and/or Technician working in your practice.

Alternatively contact the Medicines Management Team on 01226 433669 or 433798.

We would welcome any feedback you have to give on this newsletter, as well as any suggestions for future articles.

Please send ideas and comments to Claire Taylor, MMT Administration Assistant on email address claire.taylor18@nhs.net

Many Thanks