

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Area Prescribing Committee (BLMK APC)

Newsletter Number 08, March 2023

Welcome to the March 2023 BLMK Area Prescribing Committee newsletter. This newsletter contains a summary of the key recommendations and reflects the output from the eighth BLMK APC, held on 1st March 2023.

For full details of Joint Formulary additions / amendments – see separate [February 2023 Formulary Newsletter](#)

Click [here](#) to access the Bedfordshire & Luton Joint Formulary
Click [here](#) to access the Milton Keynes Joint Formulary

BLMK Medicines Optimisation Team Website

Following the transition of BLMK Clinical Commissioning Group to NHS Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (ICB) on 1st July 2022, the web address for the Medicines Management website was updated.

All approved BLMK APC documents will be uploaded to the website and all current approved JPC/MKPAG* documents will also remain on the website as before.

Medicines Optimisation Team website:

<https://medicines.bedfordshirelutonandmiltonkeynes.icb.nhs.uk/>

Searching the website:

All documents referred to within the Newsletter (where appropriate) will be available shortly on the website.

The website has an easy to use search function which should make it easy to find the information you are looking for. If you have trouble searching the website or if you have any comments / suggestions, please do let us know - contact either samantha.golton@nhs.net (Website Manager) or sandra.mcgroarty@nhs.net (Website Pharmacist Clinical Lead).

*Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Prescribing Committee (JPC) / Milton Keynes Prescribing Advisory Group (MKPAG)

The following organisations contribute to and participate in the BLMK APC – Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board; Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust; Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust; Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust; East London NHS Foundation Trust; Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

TREATMENT / PRESCRIBING GUIDELINES

Vitamins and Minerals Prescribing Guidance

NEW
GUIDANCE

A new [prescribing guidance document](#) has been produced to provide additional information and support to GP practices on the prescribing of vitamins and minerals in primary care. This complements existing guidance, which is in place for [Vitamin and Mineral Supplementation Post Bariatric Surgery](#).

Insulin degludec (Tresiba®) and insulin gargine (Toujeo®)

UPDATED
and extended
across
BLMK ICS

The Area Prescribing Committee recommendations on the use of [insulin degludec \(Tresiba®\)](#) and [insulin gargine \(Toujeo®\)](#) have been updated and extended for use across BLMK. The recommendations support the management of patients being treated with insulin degludec 100 units/ml, insulin degludec 200 units/ml and insulin glargine 300 units/ml, including patient selection and specialist responsibilities.

Formulary status:

- Insulin degludec (Tresiba®) 100 units/ml – **AMBER/AMBER1** (no stabilisation required following specialist diabetes team initiation/recommendation)
- Insulin degludec (Tresiba®) 200 units/ml and insulin glargine (Toujeo®) 300 units/ml – **AMBER/AMBER 3** (initiation and stabilisation by the specialist diabetes team)

Additional guidelines updated / uploaded to the website

WEBSITE
UPDATES

The [BLMK Hypertension guidelines](#), agreed at the December APC, are now available to view on the Medicines website.

[Testosterone for low sexual desire in women](#) – updated factsheet (recent [MHRA](#) warning included)

The national [Summary of National Guidance for Lipid Management for Primary and Secondary Prevention of CVD](#) has been updated to include Icosapent Ethyl and is available to view via the Medicines website.

SECONDARY CARE PRESCRIBING / COMMISSIONING ISSUES

Ulcerative Colitis (Moderate to Severe) Treatment Pathway

UPDATED

The [BLMK treatment pathway](#) for moderate to severe Ulcerative Colitis has been updated following the publication of new NICE guidance: Upadacitinib for treating moderately to severely active ulcerative colitis, NICE [TA856](#).

Crohn's Disease Biologic Treatment Pathway

UPDATED
and extended
across
BLMK ICS

The [treatment pathway](#) for the use of biologics in Crohn's disease has been updated to allow an additional line of treatment, and the dose escalation recommendations have been reviewed. The pathway now applies across Bedfordshire, Luton & Milton Keynes.

Ankylosing Spondylitis and Non-radiographic Axial Spondyloarthritis Treatment Pathway

UPDATED

The [BLMK treatment pathway](#) for the management of Ankylosing Spondylitis and Non-radiographic Axial Spondyloarthritis (AFTER failure of conventional treatment) has been updated following the publication of new NICE guidance: Upadacitinib for treating active non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis, NICE [TA861](#). The pathway has also been extended to allow an additional line of treatment.

Botulinum toxin guidance

The local guidance on the use of botulinum toxin has been updated following a review of the East of England Priorities Advisory Committee guidance. The recommendations now apply across Bedfordshire, Luton & Milton Keynes.

UPDATED
and extended
across
BLMK ICS

SHARED CARE GUIDELINES

The following shared care guidelines have been finalised and uploaded to the Medicines Optimisation website:

- [ADHD/Hyperkinetic Disorder](#) for Children & Young People (6-17 years) - Methylphenidate, Atomoxetine, Dexamfetamine, Lisdexamfetamine and Guanfacine (applies to Bedfordshire and Luton only).

NEW / UPDATED
SHARED CARE
GUIDELINES

MEDICINES SAFETY DRUG UPDATES (DSU) AND PATIENT SAFETY ALERTS

The APC received a Primary Care Medicines Safety Update and an update from the BLMK ICS Medicines Safety Group (MSG).

This update focussed on the primary care response to the MHRA Drug Safety Updates ([November](#) and [December](#) 2022, [January](#) and [February](#) 2023). In particular:

Nov 2022: Dupilumab (Dupixent ▼): risk of ocular adverse reactions and need for prompt management (November 2022)

Action(s) taken: Inclusion in the Primary care bulletin to raise awareness amongst prescribers to check whether patients presenting with ocular symptoms are receiving dupilumab and to escalate appropriately. The DSU was also discussed in the January MSG meeting to disseminate the information to partners and the information has been linked to the Formularies.

Valproate: reminder of current Pregnancy Prevention Programme requirements; information on new safety measures to be introduced in the coming months (December 2022)

Actions(s) taken: Work continues in this area to establish a sustainable mechanism for completion of the forms. The Committee discussed the CHM recommendations on Valproate and publication of the full CHM recommendations is awaited.

Topical testosterone (Testogel): risk of harm to children following accidental exposure (January 2023)

Action(s) taken: The testosterone for low sexual desire factsheet has been updated to include the above DSU and the information has been linked to the Formularies. This DSU will also be added to the next MSG meeting for discussion (29th March).

Xaqua (metolazone) 5mg tablets: exercise caution when switching patients between metolazone preparations (January 2023)

Action(s) taken: the MedsOpt team are working with heart failure specialists to manage the safety concerns. Information was circulated in October 2022 to partners and colleagues to raise awareness. Work continues on Scriptswitch and Optimise to develop appropriate messages for prescribers around this alert.

National Patient Safety Alert – Use of oxygen cylinders where patients do not have access to medical gas pipeline systems

Action(s) taken: This alert was issued to acute trusts with an emergency department and to ambulance trusts, however any subsequent shortages that may impact patients in Primary care (e.g. those receiving home oxygen cylinders) will continue to be monitored. The NPSA alert was also discussed at the January MSG meeting.

ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE UPDATE

Total antibiotic prescribing has gone up across BLMK, and is likely to be related to the Group A Strep (GAS) outbreak, however broad spectrum antibiotic prescribing is below the NHS England target in primary care.

Practices are reminded that the interim Clinical Guidance for managing Group A Strep has been retired and the NICE guidance on the management of Acute Sore Throat [NG84](#) was reinstated for all age groups from 15th February.

NICE TECHNOLOGY APPRAISAL GUIDANCE and GUIDELINES ISSUED / UPDATED

The following NICE Technology Appraisal Guidance (ICB Commissioned) have been published during the period 24 November 2022 until 14 February 2023 inclusive:

Luspatercept for treating anaemia caused by myelodysplastic syndromes (terminated appraisal) Technology appraisal [TA844] Published: 24 November 2022 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta844> (NB: not added to formularies – terminated appraisal).

Mepolizumab for treating severe chronic rhinosinusitis with nasal polyps (terminated appraisal) Technology appraisal [TA847] Published: 29 November 2022 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta847> (NB: not added to formularies – terminated appraisal).

Esketamine nasal spray for treatment-resistant depression Technology appraisal guidance [TA854] Published: 14 December 2022 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta854> (NB: not added to formularies – terminated appraisal).

Avatrombopag for treating primary chronic immune thrombocytopenia Technology appraisal guidance [TA853] Published: 15 December 2022 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta853> (NB: added to formularies with **RED** traffic light status).

Upadacitinib for treating moderately to severely active ulcerative colitis Technology appraisal guidance [TA856] Published: 04 January 2023 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta856> (NB: added to formularies with **RED** traffic light status).

Angiotensin II for treating vasopressor-resistant hypotension caused by septic or distributive shock (terminated appraisal) Technology appraisal [TA859] Published: 16 January 2023 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta859> (NB: not added to formularies – terminated appraisal).

Upadacitinib for treating active non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis Technology appraisal guidance [TA861] Published: 01 February 2023 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta861> (NB: added to formularies with **RED** traffic light status).

Somatogon for treating growth disturbance in people 3 years and over Technology appraisal guidance [TA863] Published: 01 February 2023 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta863> (NB: added to formularies with **RED** traffic light status).

[Click here](#) to access **all** technology appraisal guidelines - ICB and NHSE Commissioned (24th November 2022 until 14th February 2023 inclusive)

NICE Guidelines:

NICE have published several NICE Guidelines since December 2022 - [click here](#) to access these guidelines.

ADDITIONAL PAPERS/ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE

HidraWear, a wound dressing system for the management of difficult to dress areas in patients with Hidradenitis Suppurativa (HS), has been added to the BLMK wound care formularies. Prescribing is restricted to Tissue Viability Nurses or specialists, for use when other treatment options have been unsuccessful, with no primary care prescribing (**RED** traffic light – no primary care prescribing).

BLMK APC 2023 MEETING DATES

Wednesday 3rd May 2023
Wednesday 5th July 2023
Wednesday 27th September 2023
Wednesday 6th December 2023

OTHER NEWS

Use of Scriptswitch/Optimise Rx

To further enhance the communication of BLMK APC advice to GPs, the BLMK ICB medicines management team **are actively reviewing the messages on NetFormulary, Scriptswitch and Optimise Rx** to highlight when BLMK APC guidance is available and including a hyperlink to the BLMK Medicines Optimisation website. Please advise us if you notice any issues.

Contact Us:  anne.graeff@nhs.net and sandra.mcgroarty@nhs.net