

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

Newsletter Number 17, December 2024

Welcome to the December 2024 BLMK Area Prescribing Committee newsletter. This newsletter contains a summary of the key recommendations, and reflects the output from, the BLMK APC meeting held on 4th December 2024.

For full details of Joint Formulary additions / amendments – see separate [November 2024 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

All current, approved BLMK APC documents are available on the BLMK Medicines website (current documents, that were previously approved by the JPC/MKPAG*, can also be found on the website, where applicable).

Medicines Optimisation Team website:

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

Searching the website:

All documents referred to within this 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

Melatonin prescribing support information – use in children & young people

NEW
GUIDANCE

The previous Bedfordshire & Luton shared care guideline for the use of melatonin in children & adolescents has been retired. The formulary status for melatonin in this patient population has been changed to **Amber SplS** and a [prescribing support document](#) produced to aid clinicians.

Adult Oral Nutritional Supplement prescribing guidelines

UPDATED

The BLMK wide adult Oral Nutritional Supplement (ONS) [prescribing guidelines](#) have been reviewed and updated. The recommendations are applicable for adults in primary care (i.e. not in an inpatient setting). The most appropriate and cost-effective products have been recommended, retaining the previous 'traffic light' style layout.

Infant formulae prescribing guidelines

UPDATED

The BLMK [infant formulae prescribing guidelines](#) have been reviewed and updated. Recommendations on product choice have been revised to reflect current availability and cost-effectiveness. Guidance on volumes to prescribe and timelines for reviewing formula are also included.

BLMK contraception guidance

UPDATED

The BLMK contraception guidance for primary care has been updated to reflect recent licensing changes for the levonorgestrel releasing IUDs. Click [here](#) to access the guidance.

Paediatric asthma guideline

UPDATED

The [BLMK paediatric asthma guideline](#), for use in children and young people ≤16 years, has undergone a minor update to include additional inhaler choices for 12-16 year olds being treated with AIR/MART regimens. This is due to recent license extensions for some inhalers, making them additional options for those on SABA-free regimes.

SECONDARY CARE PRESCRIBING / COMMISSIONING ISSUES

Ophthalmology intravitreal injections algorithm

UPDATED

The [BLMK intravitreal injections algorithm](#) has been updated to include the recently published [NICE TA1044](#) recommendations on faricimab for the treatment of retinal vein occlusion. Faricimab is an additional treatment option for adults with visual impairment caused by macular oedema after central or branch retinal vein occlusion.

High Flow Oxygen Policy (myAIRVO2)

UPDATED
and extended
across
BLMK ICS

The existing Bedfordshire and Luton policy on the use of high flow oxygen (via the myAIRVO2 system) has been reviewed, updated and extended to cover the whole of the BLMK ICS. The myAIRVO2 system delivers warmed and humidified oxygen, including at high-flow rates, and can be used in the home or other domiciliary care environment only.

SHARED CARE GUIDELINES

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

NEW / UPDATED
SHARED CARE
GUIDELINES

- The existing Bedfordshire/Luton and Milton Keynes shared care guidelines on the use of apomorphine for patients with refractory motor fluctuations in Parkinson's disease have been revised and updated to produce one BLMK wide [apomorphine shared care guideline](#). The previous, separate, shared care guidelines have been retired.
- The contact details for the Bedfordshire Hospitals Rheumatology team have been updated in the Bedfordshire & Luton [overarching Rheumatology DMARD shared care guideline](#). See separate [Rheumatology DMARD shared care](#) document for patients in Milton Keynes.

WOUND CARE FORMULARY UPDATES

Updates from the Wound Management Formulary Steering Subgroup of the APC:

FORMULARY
ADDITIONS/
CHANGES/
UPDATES

- UrgoK2 reduced compression bandages, approved at September 2024 APC, will not go on the Community Wound Management Formularies until training has been rolled out across the BLMK ICS.
- **Reminder:** the wound management formularies have recently been migrated to a new website, [Eolas Medical](#), which offers easier access to local guidelines as well as a host of other resources. An Eolas Medical app, with offline functionality, is also available.

NICE TECHNOLOGY APPRAISAL GUIDANCE and GUIDELINES ISSUED / UPDATED

The following NICE Technology Appraisal Guidance (ICB Commissioned) have been published during the period 12 September until 20 November 2024 inclusive:

Empagliflozin for treating type 2 diabetes in people 10 to 17 years (terminated appraisal) Technology appraisal Reference number: TA1006 Published: 12 September 2024 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta1006> (link added to formularies – TERMINATED APPRAISAL).

Latanoprost–netarsudil for previously treated primary open-angle glaucoma or ocular hypertension Technology appraisal guidance Reference number: TA1009 Published: 02 October 2024 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta1009> (added to formularies with **Amber SpA** traffic light status).

[Click here](#) to access **all** technology appraisal guidelines - ICB and NHSE Commissioned (12th September until 20th November 2024 inclusive)

NICE Guidelines:

NICE have published several NICE Guidelines since September 2024 – [click here](#) to access these 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 ([October](#) and [November 2024](#)). In particular:

GLP-1 receptor agonists: reminder of the potential side effects and to be aware of the potential for misuse (DSU, October 2024)

Action(s) taken: linked to formulary for information.

Insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) equipment: guidance for users on reporting suspected adverse incidents and safety concerns to the MHRA's Yellow Card scheme (DSU, October 2024)

Action(s) taken: linked to formulary for information. Shared with practices via the primary care bulletin to raise awareness.

Bromocriptine: monitor blood pressure when prescribing bromocriptine for prevention or inhibition of post-partum physiological lactation (DSU, October 2024)

Action(s) taken: Linked to formulary for information. Formularies rationalised to non-formulary status.

MedSafetyWeek November 2024: your Yellow Card report helps prevent future harm to others and improves patient safety. The ninth annual #MedSafetyWeek social media campaign took place between 4th to 10th November 2024 (DSU, November 2024)

Actions(s) taken: Information shared with primary care during MedSafetyWeek to highlight the campaign and the resources available to support healthcare professionals in raising the awareness of the importance of using medicines in the right way to prevent side effects, and to report adverse effects when they do occur.

Risk of oxytocin overdose during labour and childbirth ([CAS alert, September 2024](#))

Action(s) taken: Relevant to secondary care; use of carbetocin to be considered. There is an [SPS article](#) to support with this alert.

Discontinuation of Kay-Cee-L® (potassium chloride 375mg/5ml) (potassium chloride 5mmol/5ml) syrup ([CAS alert, October 2024](#))

Action(s) taken: Unlicensed preparations have been available at trusts as a response to the shortages. The formularies have been reviewed and updated to include unlicensed 1mmol/ml potassium chloride oral solution (**RED** formulary status, for use in paediatric patients (0-17 years) on a dose <12mmol only).

Medicines Safety Group (MSG) update:

- **Valproate system response update** – practices have now completed an audit of patients prescribed valproate and an analysis has been undertaken of progress made with reviewing and referring patients who require an annual risk assessment form (ARAF) to be completed. This has identified a reduction in overall numbers of females of childbearing age on valproate and an increase in patient numbers who have either had an ARAF completed or are exempt. Referrals are being made to specialists when applicable.
- **Topiramate** – a local audit is planned, and providers are encouraged to identify patients on topiramate and check adherence to the requirements of the safety alert.
- **Clozapine** – several recent local incidents involving clozapine have been shared. Issues identified include the recording of clozapine in a patient's Summary Care Record (SCR) for sharing across the interface, and management of patients on clozapine who are admitted to hospital including the provision of supply out of hours. ICS organisations are reviewing and updating their policies and procedures.
- **Colchicine** – a recent death, possibly related to colchicine toxicity, has been highlighted. Colchicine is [extremely toxic in overdose](#) and a memo has been shared with practices to raise awareness of the risks associated with its use.

ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE UPDATE

Reminder: A new BLMK antibiotics guidelines website has been developed, which may be accessed [here](#).

BLMK APC 2025 FUTURE MEETING DATES

Wednesday 26th February 2025
Wednesday 7th May 2025
Wednesday 2nd July 2025
Wednesday 24th September 2025
Wednesday 3rd December 2025

OTHER NEWS

Use of Optimise Rx

To further enhance the communication of BLMK APC advice to GPs and other primary care clinicians, the BLMK ICB medicines optimisation team **are actively reviewing the messages on NetFormulary 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.

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