

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Area Prescribing Committee (BLMK APC) Newsletter Number 19, May 2025

Welcome to the May 2025 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 7th May 2025.

For full details of Joint Formulary additions / amendments – see separate [April 2025 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

Medicines in Schools Guidance

The previous Bedfordshire guidance to support schools with managing medicines has been reviewed, updated and extended for use across BLMK. The document contains information on prescription and over the counter medicines, including controlled drugs, salbutamol inhalers and adrenaline auto-injectors, and covers additional information on situations such as school trips, disposal of medicines, and children with special educational needs and disabilities. [Click here](#) to access the Medicines in Schools guidance.

UPDATED
and extended
across
BLMK ICS

Vitamin D in Adults Guideline

The separate guidelines for the prescribing and management of [vitamin D in adults](#) have been reviewed and combined into an updated document for use across BLMK. The document covers risk factors, when to test, thresholds for deficiency / insufficiency, lifestyle advice, management (according to vitamin D levels), treatment regimens and formulary choices, and additional guidance for pregnancy and breastfeeding.

UPDATED
and extended
across
BLMK ICS

Osteoporosis guidelines

The BLMK Osteoporosis guidelines have been reviewed to take into account updated national guidance on the management of osteoporosis. The document provides guidance on drug treatment choices, review of treatment, risk factors, DXA scans, and when to refer to the specialist team. Please note that guidance for patients on corticosteroids has been removed and will be presented in a separate document.

UPDATED

Adult recurrent UTI guidance

New BLMK adult recurrent urinary tract infection (rUTI) guidance has been developed to support primary care clinicians managing patients with rUTI. The document includes information on conservative measures, vaginal oestrogen, urinary antiseptic (methenamine hippurate) and antibiotic prophylaxis. Additionally, guidance is provided on reviewing and stopping prophylaxis, standby antibiotics, and managing 'breakthrough' UTIs.

NEW
GUIDANCE

Buccal midazolam prescribing guidance

The [BLMK buccal midazolam prescribing guidance](#) has been updated to reflect changes in product licensing and provide some additional clarification. Buccolam® remains the preferred product for all patients within BLMK (children and adults).

UPDATED

Additional guidelines updated / uploaded to the website

- The [switching guide](#) from injectable GLP1 receptor agonists to oral semaglutide has been updated to reflect the discontinuation of the Victoza® brand of liraglutide.
- The prescribing support guidance for [liraglutide for children and young people under 18 years with Type 2 Diabetes](#) has also been updated to reflect the discontinuation of Victoza® and use of liraglutide biosimilar.
- The [BLMK Lipid Management Pathway](#) for the Secondary Prevention of Cardiovascular Events has been finalised and uploaded onto the Medicines website.

WEBSITE
UPDATES

SECONDARY CARE PRESCRIBING / COMMISSIONING ISSUES

Moderate to severe atopic dermatitis pathway

UPDATED

The BLMK pathway for the [management of moderate to severe atopic dermatitis](#) has been updated to provide additional clarity around the threshold EASI and DLQI scores required in order for a patient to be eligible for treatment in accordance with the relevant NICE technology appraisal guidance.

Ritlecitinib for severe alopecia areata

NEW
GUIDANCE

The APC ratified the East of England Priorities Advisory Committee (EoE PAC) recommendations on [ritlecitinib for treating severe alopecia areata in people 12 years and over](#). The PAC recommendations provide additional information and clarification for the implementation of [NICE TA958](#).

SHARED CARE GUIDELINES

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

- The BLMK shared care guideline for the treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder ([ADHD](#)) in Children & Young People (6-17 years) has now been finalised and is available on the Medicines website.

NEW / UPDATED
SHARED CARE
GUIDELINES

WOUND CARE FORMULARY UPDATES

The following amendments have been made to the wound care formularies:

- **UrgoTul Absorb Border** has been added to the wound formularies as a joint first line foam dressing alongside Suprasorb P sensitive. It is anticipated that UrgoTul Absorb Border will be used mainly in secondary care whilst Suprasorb P sensitive mainly in the community.
- **Flamigel RT** has been added to both the hospital and community wound care formularies in line with the pathway for use on radiodermatitis, as part of the specialist treatment pathway.

FORMULARY
ADDITIONS/
CHANGES/
UPDATES

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 13 February until 23 April 2025 inclusive:

12 SQ-HDM SLIT for treating allergic rhinitis and allergic asthma caused by house dust mites Technology appraisal guidance Reference number: TA1045 Published: 05 March 2025
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta1045> (added to BLMK formularies with **RED** formulary status)

Molnupiravir for treating COVID-19 Technology appraisal guidance Reference number: TA1056 Published: 16 April 2025 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta1056> (added to BLMK formularies with **RED** formulary status)

Relugolix–estradiol–norethisterone for treating symptoms of endometriosis Technology appraisal guidance Reference number: TA1057 Published: 16 April 2025 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta1057> (added to BLMK formularies with **Amber SpIS** formulary status).

[Click here](#) to access **all** technology appraisal guidelines - ICB and NHSE Commissioned (13 February until 23 April 2025 inclusive)

NICE Guidelines:

NICE have published several NICE Guidelines since March 2025 - [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 ([February](#), [March](#) and [April](#) 2025). Note: as of March 2025, the MHRA is no longer publishing monthly Drug Safety Updates (DSUs). They are now publishing monthly Safety Roundup bulletins, which incorporate the DSU. In particular:

Valproate (Belvo, Convulex, Depakote, Dyzantil, Epilim, Epilim Chrono or Chronosphere, Episenta, Epival, and Syonell ▼): two specialist review will not be required for male patients already taking valproate (February 2025)

Review by two specialists remains in place for patients initiating valproate under 55 years of age, but the Commission on Human Medicines (CHM) has advised that it will not be required for men currently taking valproate. Three infographics have been developed to provide clarity regarding valproate prescribing and which situations would require review by 2 specialists:

- [for female patients under 55 years old](#)
- [for male patients under 55 years old](#)
- [for male and female patients 55 years and older](#)

Actions taken: Linked to formulary for information and shared at place based prescribing meetings. Providers to incorporate the infographics into their policies.

Prolonged-release opioids: Removal of indication for relief of post-operative pain (March 2025)

The indication for the treatment of post-operative pain has been removed from the licences of all prolonged release opioids due to the increased risk of persistent post-operative opioid use (PPOU) and opioid-induced ventilatory impairment (OIVI).

Actions taken: Linked to formulary for information. This alert will be discussed at the June MSG.

Fezolinetant ▼ (Veoza): risk of liver injury; new recommendations to minimise risk (April 2025)

Fezolinetant treatment is associated with a risk of drug induced liver disease. New recommendations have been introduced to minimise this risk.

Actions taken: linked to formulary for information (NB: fezolinetant is currently non-formulary pending NICE technology appraisal publication. Expected publication date: tbc. Draft recommendations are negative). This alert will be discussed at the June MSG.

Discontinuation of Promixin (colistimethate) 1-million unit powder for nebuliser solution unit dose vials (CAS alert, March 2025)

Promixin® (colistimethate) 1-million-unit powder for nebuliser solution unit dose vials (UDVs) are being discontinued from early May 2025, with stocks anticipated to be exhausted by this date.

Actions taken: providers are working on an action plan to identify and prioritise patients for switching to an alternative preparation or medicine. A national Optimise Rx message is in place. The alert has been shared with community pharmacies and will be discussed in full at the June MSG meeting.

Medicines Safety Group (MSG) Update:

- **Valproate** – ELFT has shared their Valproate policy, which was produced with the involvement of stakeholders and patients. Incorporation of this great piece of work across the ICS is planned.

- **Topiramate** – BHFT have put together an audit proposal and designed a tool. The results and completed template will be shared with the MSG for wider use. Patient numbers in primary care will be obtained for baseline data. Generally, primary care is aware and have been proactive in reviewing patients on topiramate for migraine.

ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE UPDATE

The [BLMK primary care antimicrobial prescribing guidelines](#) have recently been reviewed and updated. This pulls together recent updates to national guidance and the formularies have been amended accordingly.

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

ADDITIONAL PAPERS/ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE

Tirzepatide for managing overweight and obesity

The initial funding for the implementation of [NICE TA1026](#) has now been allocated to the ICS. An implementation model / commissioned service is in development and will be in place for the primary care implementation date for TA1026. There should be no primary care prescribing of tirzepatide for the management of overweight and obesity.

Treatments for Covid-19

On 01 May 2025 NICE published an [update to TA878](#) – nirmatrelvir plus ritonavir, sotrovimab and tocilizumab for treating COVID-19. The recommendation for nirmatrelvir plus ritonavir was updated. Nirmatrelvir plus ritonavir is no longer cost effective for the groups evaluated in the partial review (people with diabetes, obesity or heart failure, or aged 70 years or over). So, these groups were removed from the recommendation. Nirmatrelvir plus ritonavir remains cost effective for the highest-risk group, so this recommendation remains in place.

Within BLMK, the Covid Medicines Delivery Unit (CMDU) continues to triage and treat patients for Covid-19. No primary care prescribing is recommended and therefore all Covid-19 treatments are **RED** on the BLMK formularies (restricted to prescribing by specialists in the CMDU service or secondary care only in accordance with NICE recommendations).

BLMK APC 2025 FUTURE MEETING DATES

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, 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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