

# Supply Issues Bulletin

**March 2014 (Vol 2, No. 3)**

**Please Circulate to All Staff**

A regular update bulletin which informs and advises GP Practices on the latest medicine supply problems and product discontinuations, with additional local advice on suggested actions or alternatives.

The information is collated from a range of sources.

Information on **product discontinuations** is collated using information received from manufacturers, and also online resources<sup>1</sup>.

**Intermittent supply problems** can occur due to either manufacturing issues causing shortages of **branded** products ('Manufacturer Cannot Supply', **MCS**) or supply issues affecting **generic** medicines, resulting in generics being difficult to obtain at Scottish Drug Tariff Part 7 (SDT) prices, or at all ('**Short Supply**', **SHS**).

Information on Part 7 generic medicines which are identified as being in short supply is published on a monthly basis in the form of SDT Part 13 and is updated throughout the month by ISD (<http://tinyurl.com/ScotDT>). Information is also available via the Community Pharmacy Scotland Website (<http://tinyurl.com/CPS-ShortagesInfo>). Inclusion in Part 13 allows Community Pharmacists to be reimbursed appropriately if higher costs are incurred in obtaining those Part 7 generics listed.

Supply issues are constantly in flux and your local Community Pharmacists will be able to give you up to date advice on availability.

The advice in this bulletin is not intended to serve as a standard of medical care or be applicable in every situation. Decisions regarding the treatment of individual patients must be made by the clinician in light of that patient's presenting clinical condition and with reference to current good medical practice.

Refs: 1. [http://www.pjonline.com/discontinued\\_products](http://www.pjonline.com/discontinued_products)

## Products with Supply Issues

Product	Current Supply Problem	Impact & Advice
Valsartan capsules and tablets (generic and branded Diovan <sup>®</sup> )	Currently supply problems with both the generic and branded capsules and tablets. Two generic suppliers suggest resolution in the first half of 2014.	Where pharmacies are unable to source the product UKMI have provided guidance on switching to alternative ARBs: <a href="http://www.medicinesresources.nhs.uk/en/Communities/NHS/SPS-E-and-SE-England/Medicines-Information/Discontinuation-Supply-Shortage-Memos/Shortage-of-Valsartan/">http://www.medicinesresources.nhs.uk/en/Communities/NHS/SPS-E-and-SE-England/Medicines-Information/Discontinuation-Supply-Shortage-Memos/Shortage-of-Valsartan/</a> Prescribers will need to ascertain the most appropriate alternative treatment bearing in mind licensed indications and doses. Candestartan is first line ARB on the FV formulary and losartan is also on the formulary. Local cardiology opinion supports this approach.
Orphenadrine 50mg tablets	Temporary supply issues have been reported by some pharmacies.	Some pharmacies may have residual stocks or be able to obtain some supplies. Liquid is available. Where a change of therapy is required please contact the Mental Health Clinical Pharmacy Team for advice (Tel No 01324 566728 or 01324 566729).
Clomipramine capsules 10mg,20mg & 50mg	Current supply issues with no date available for resolution.	Clomipramine modified release tablets 75mg are still available at present and this may be considered if a conversion to the same dose of this formulation is feasible.  If changing to the modified release is not possible, changing to another antidepressant may be necessary. Potential alternative antidepressants should be considered on a case by case basis.  Further advice in relation to suitable alternatives can be obtained by contacting the Mental Health Clinical Pharmacy Team (Tel No 01324 566728 or 01324 566729).

Product	Current Supply Problem	Impact & Advice
Mefenamic acid 500mg tablets	Generic 500mg tablets are reported as currently unavailable (no date for resolution), as are branded Ponstan <sup>®</sup> . Ponstan <sup>®</sup> is expected to be available by May 2014	Some pharmacies may have residual stocks. Supplies of 250mg capsules may be available, otherwise an alternative NSAID will need to be prescribed, Mefenamic acid is not on FV formulary. Formulary choices include ibuprofen and naproxen.
Piroxicam 0.5% gel	Reports of problems with supply of generic product. Supply expected to resume by end of April 2014	Some pharmacies may have residual stock or be able to obtain sporadic supplies. FV formulary alternative is Algesal <sup>®</sup> .
Vibramycin –D <sup>®</sup> (doxycycline monohydrate) dispersible tablets 100mg	Manufacturer expects supply to resume by the end of April 2014.	Doxycycline generic capsules are available. In the meantime for patients unable to swallow capsules, only unlicensed Specials are available. The capsules are NOT suitable for opening as the powder is irritant. Check current availability with your local Community Pharmacy.
Napratec <sup>®</sup> (naproxen/misoprostol 500mg/200mcg) tablets	Currently unavailable – no date for resolution.	Generic naproxen standard tablets are the formulary choice, with omeprazole or lansoprazole capsules as gastroprotection.
Nuelin SA <sup>®</sup> (theophylline) tablets 175mg & 250mg	Manufacturer is out of stock following some supplies being made available, with no date available for expected resolution.	Some pharmacies may have stock. Uniphyllin Continus <sup>®</sup> is on the FV formulary but different products are not interchangeable, due to different rates of release and absorption. Where Nuelin <sup>®</sup> is unavailable, local advice is to switch to Uniphyllin <sup>®</sup> Continus and check theophylline levels one week after the switch.
Temazepam tablets	Supply issues over last few months. <b>SDT price remains high</b> (March 2013) for 28 tablets is £23.77 (10mg) and £22.61 (20mg)	<b>No new patients should be started on Temazepam.</b>
Depo-Medrone <sup>®</sup> (methylprednisolone)	Manufacturer expects supply to resume by end of June 2014	Some pharmacies may have residual stock.

**Ongoing supply issues with:**

Hyoscine hydrobromide 150mcg (Joy Rides<sup>®</sup>) – Kwells<sup>®</sup> are now available (see below). Polytar<sup>®</sup> Liquid; Norfloxacin tablets are still experiencing problems. See [November 2013](#) bulletin for information and advice. For information on current vaccine supply issues see the latest edition of the [Scottish Vaccine Update](#).

### Resolved Supply Issues

Forceval <sup>®</sup> Capsules are now available – all patients currently receiving the dispersible formulation should be switched back to capsules in due course to ensure cost-effective prescribing.
Hyoscine hydrobromide 150mcg & 300mcg (Kwells <sup>®</sup> ) – supplies are beginning to get through to wholesalers and are expected to be readily available by the first week of April. Patients who are currently prescribed pirenzepine or Scopoderm <sup>®</sup> for <b>hypersalivation</b> should be reviewed.
Antabuse <sup>®</sup> (disulfiram) <b>200mg</b> tablets – now available.
Morphgesic <sup>®</sup> (morphine) SR tablets – Now available in all strengths
Mebeverine 135mg tablets – although problems are ongoing with generic products, branded Colofac <sup>®</sup> supply has resumed. The SDT Part 7 price has been increased temporarily to take account of the supply situation. <b>Prescriptions should continue to be written by generic name.</b> The increased Part 7 price will enable Pharmacies to dispense the available product against generic scripts.
See the March Issue of <a href="#">Scottish Vaccine Update</a> for information on Yellow Fever vaccine.

### Discontinued Products

Discontinued Product	FV Formulary & Advice
Vectavir <sup>®</sup> (Penciclovir) 1% Cold Sore Cream	Aciclovir 5% Cream remains available as the Formulary choice.
Half Inderal <sup>®</sup> LA and Inderal <sup>®</sup> LA capsules	Generic MR Capsules formulations are available – ensure generic prescribing

**Contact Information:**

General Primary Care Prescribing Advice:

Contact your Primary Care Pharmacist; or alternatively

Primary Care Prescribing Support Team on 01786-431200

Email: [FV-UHB.prescribingsupport@nhs.net](mailto:FV-UHB.prescribingsupport@nhs.net)

<http://staffnet.fv.scot.nhs.uk/index.php/a-z/pharmacy/area-wide/bulletins-and-publications/>