

Supply Issues Bulletin

April/May 2014 (Vol 2, No. 4)

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 resources¹.

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

Products with Supply Issues

Product	Current Supply Problem	Impact & Advice
Antabuse [®] (disulfiram) 200mg tablets	Manufacturer experiencing further supply problems, a batch has gone out to wholesalers but next supply not expected until June 2014	Check availability with local community pharmacies. An imported product, disulfiram 500mg tablets (Esperal [®]) is available from IDIS. This product does not have a UK marketing authorisation - full prescribing responsibility lies with the prescriber. The Substance Misuse Service has advised that 250mg (half a tablet) may be an appropriate alternative dose for patients currently receiving 200mg tablet dose (Esperal [®] tablets are scored, allowing them to be halved). Any patients receiving the imported product should be advised of the new strength/dose. FVRH holds a small supply of the imported product. Further advice may be obtained from Substance Misuse Services (North Team 01786 434433; South Team 01324 673656).
Valsartan capsules and tablets (generic and branded Diovan [®])	Currently supply problems with both the generic and branded capsules and tablets. Some pharmacies have reported some intermittent stock available in response to specific enquiries to wholesalers.	Where pharmacies are unable to source the product UKMI have provided guidance on switching to alternative ARBs: http://tinyurl.com/UKMI-ValsartanAdvice 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).

Product	Current Supply Problem	Impact & Advice
Lomotil® Tablets	Unavailable until 2015	Generic products are available (co-phenotrope tablets). Co-phenotrope is non-formulary. Loperamide capsules are the formulary choice. Where co-phenotrope is considered necessary, prescribe by generic name.
Piroxicam 0.5% gel	Reports of problems with supply of generic product. Some supplies expected to resume mid to end May.	The Scottish Drug Tariff price of the 112g pack has temporarily been increased to allow dispensing of the branded product (which is currently available) against generic prescriptions. Continue to prescribe by generic name . Where an alternative is required the FV formulary alternative is Algesal®.
Vibramycin –D® (doxycycline monohydrate) dispersible tablets 100mg	Manufacturer expects supply to resume by the end of June 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.
Naprtec® (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® (theophylline) tablets 175mg & 250mg	Nuelin SA® 250mg is now available. Nuelin SA® 175mg strength is expected to be available from the end of May.	Some pharmacies may have stock. Uniphyllin Continus® is on the FV formulary but different products are not interchangeable, due to different rates of release and absorption. Where Nuelin® is unavailable, local advice is to switch to Uniphyllin® Continus and check theophylline levels one week after the switch.
Temazepam tablets	Supply issues over last few months. SDT price remains high (April 2014) for 28 tablets is £20.55 (10mg) and £19.64 (20mg)	No new patients should be started on Temazepam.
Depo-Medrone® (methylprednisolone)	Manufacturer expects supply to resume by end of June 2014	Some pharmacies may have residual stock.
Ongoing supply issues with: Hyoscine hydrobromide - Kwells® (150mcg and 300mcg) are available . Joy-Rides® 150mcg are still unavailable with no date for resolution - Polytar® 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
Clomipramine capsules (all strengths) are now available.
Mefenamic acid 500mg tablets are reported as being available again.
Nuelin SA® 250mg tablets are now available.
Hyoscine hydrobromide 150mcg & 300mcg (Kwells®) – supplies are now available. Patients who are currently prescribed pirenzepine or Scopoderm® for hypersalivation should be reviewed.

Discontinued Products

Discontinued Product	FV Formulary & Advice
Glucophage® (Metformin) sachets	There is a licensed oral solution. It is NOT recommended that the tablets are crushed.
Macrodantin® 50mg capsules	Generic nitrofurantoin 50mg & 100mg capsules are available. Prescribe by generic name. CAPSULES are the most cost-effective formulation of nitrofurantoin.
Sanomigran® Elixir and 0.5mg tablets (pizotifen)	Generic Pizotifen 0.5mg tablets are available – ensure prescribed by generic name. There is no alternative liquid formulation available but where an alternative drug is not an option for the patient, tablets may be crushed and mixed with water for administration (NEWT Guidelines (2 nd Edition))
Testosterone Implants 100mg & 200mg	Alternative testosterone preparations/formulations are available
Gopten® (trandolapril) capsules	Generic products are available – ensure prescriptions are written by generic name.

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

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