

Please circulate to all relevant Staff

MHRA Drug Safety Update

Topical Testosterone (Testogel®): risk of harm to children following accidental exposure

Premature puberty and genital enlargement have been reported in children who were in close physical contact with an adult using topical testosterone and who were repeatedly accidentally exposed to this medicine. To reduce these risks, **advise patients to wash their hands after application of topical testosterone, cover the application site with clothing once the product has dried, and wash the application site before physical contact with another adult or child.**

When prescribing topical testosterone, inform patients of the potential consequences if it is accidentally transferred to other people and counsel patients on methods to reduce the risks of accidental exposure. For full information see [MHRA Alert](#).

Note: In NHS Forth Valley, testosterone is included on the formulary as specialist initiation/recommendation and then continued in Primary Care for use in men only. **Off-label use in women e.g. as part of HRT for women with reduced sexual desire is restricted to specialist use only and not recommended to be prescribed in Primary Care.**

Prescribing Safety Update

Prescription Instalment Instructions

Within a recent Drug Related Death (DRD) review, it was highlighted that instalment information text from EMIS PCS was not being transferred onto patient Electronic Care Summary (ECS) drug lists on clinical portal. This is of particular concerns where a patient may be having medicines prescribed on a daily basis due to the risk of misuse or overdose.

Clinicians who rely on ECS data, e.g. those who work in Out of Hours (OOH), need to be aware of this limitation if prescribing drugs of potential abuse or harm, and should consider the quantity of any medicines prescribed.

Supply Information Update

How to Access the Latest Supply Information

For local advice on supply issues, see the [Local Supply Bulletin](#). This information is available to all Forth Valley Staff and community pharmacies.

The supply information within Scriptswitch is updated on a weekly basis using the [SPS Supply Tool](#) and contains up to date local guidance on managing supply problems. This information will be more up to date than the Supply Bulletin which is issued on a monthly basis.

Clinicians are encouraged to sign up to the [Specialist Pharmacy Service \(SPS\) Medicines Supply Tool](#). This tool contains up to date information about current shortages and discontinued products, as well as useful prescribing advice to manage supply problems. However, this is tailored to NHS England and may not always be applicable within NHS Forth Valley.

Community pharmacies are reminded that the local [Medicines Shortage Flow Chart](#) should be followed for any supply issues. Contacting the patient's GP practice should only be considered after the previous steps have been exhausted and an alternative medicine is needed.

Forth Valley Guideline Updates

Switching Patients Taking Warfarin to a Direct Acting Oral Anti-Coagulant

Updated version of guideline approved in April 2023. Guidance has been developed to aid clinicians in reviewing patients currently taking warfarin in order to determine if they can be safely switched to a direct acting oral anti-coagulant (DOAC). Most recent version removes reference to COVID-19 and guideline is now accepted for use with all appropriate patients. [See guideline here.](#)

Controlled Drug Policy

Updated version of guideline approved in February 2023. This document sets out the use and management of controlled drugs (CDs) in NHS Forth Valley and will support healthcare professionals within NHS Forth Valley in implementing and maintaining the required procedures. [See guideline here.](#)

Forth Valley Formulary Updates

Micronised progesterone (Utrogestan®) 100mg capsules

The Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) has now accepted the use of micronised progesterone (Utrogestan®) for use in NHS Scotland. Micronised progesterone (Utrogestan®) can now be prescribed for adjunctive use with oestrogen in post-menopausal women with an intact uterus, as hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Micronised progesterone (Utrogestan®) has now been accepted onto the NHS Forth Valley formulary as an alternative first line option to medroxyprogesterone acetate for this indication. See [SMC decision here](#) and [NHS Forth Valley Formulary here](#).

Budesonide (Jorveza®) oro-dispersible tablets

Jorveza® oro-dispersible tablets are approved for use for the treatment and maintenance of patients with eosinophilic oesophagitis where a minimum 4 week trial of a PPI has been ineffective in controlling symptoms. Jorveza® use is limited to specialist initiation or recommendation. Jorveza® should **not** be commenced in primary care unless on specialist recommendation. See [NHS Forth Valley Formulary here](#).

Empagliflozin (Jardiance®)

Empagliflozin has now been approved in NHS Forth Valley as an add-on for the treatment of symptomatic chronic heart failure **with reduced ejection fraction in patients** who are on optimised therapy but remain symptomatic. Empagliflozin should only be prescribed for the treatment of symptomatic chronic heart failure with reduced ejection fraction in Primary Care on the recommendation of a Heart Failure specialist. This provides an alternative option to dapagliflozin which is the other SGLT2 inhibitor used for this indication. See [NHS Forth Valley Formulary here](#).

Scriptswitch Update (Primary Care Only)

Missed Savings

Practice performance reports are issued directly to practices on a quarterly basis. These reports come directly from Optum (the developer of Scriptswitch). Within these reports, they list the top missed savings within each practice. To ensure cost-effective prescribing and the most effective use of NHS resources, we ask that practices review this information in conjunction with their pharmacy team to identify any areas where savings could be made.

How are we Performing?

For the period February to April 2023—clinicians saved NHS Forth Valley approximately £106,000 by accepting and following Scriptswitch recommendations. NHS Forth Valley currently has the highest acceptance rate for Scriptswitch messages across NHS Scotland at around 52%.

Request for Feedback

To ensure the messages displayed to clinicians by the Scriptswitch system are helpful and informative, we would ask that if anyone has any feedback about specific messages that appear from the Scriptswitch system, that they provide us with feedback through the 'Feedback' function on the Scriptswitch pop-up.

To improve the quality of information on Scriptswitch your feedback is essential!