

## MEDICINES OPTIMISATION

### South East London (SEL) Primary Care Antimicrobial Prescribing Guidelines on Eolas® - new section published

The [SEL Primary Care Antimicrobial Prescribing Guidelines on Eolas®](#) has a new section published on Gastrostomy Site Infections (Stoma Site Care).

### Workforce and patient safety: electronic communications on patient discharge from acute hospitals

The Health Services Safety Investigations Body (HSSIB) have produced a report on [workforce and patient safety – electronic communications on patient discharge from acute hospitals](#) highlighting ongoing patient safety risks linked to poor communication and digital handover when patients are discharged from hospital.

#### Actions:

- Please read and disseminate to all relevant staff

### NHS Obesity Medication Pathway

Ardens Manager have released a new dashboard to support identification and the phased introduction of Mounjaro® (tirzepatide) for weight management in primary care.

A new service is currently being developed so that eligible patients can access this medication through a dedicated primary care pathway.

Mounjaro® (tirzepatide) is not yet available to be prescribed in primary care for weight management in SE London. Further information is available [here](#).

To support the planning and implementation of this new pathway. Practices have been asked to accept the contract invitation; this can be found on the right hand side of the Ardens Manager home page. It requires one member of staff from each practice to accept the contract on behalf of the practice.

#### Actions:

- Accept the Ardens Manager NHS Obesity Medication Pathway invite.

### Discontinuation of FreeStyle Libre® 2 continuous glucose monitoring sensors and replacement with FreeStyle Libre® 2 PLUS sensors

FreeStyle Libre® 2 continuous glucose monitoring sensors are being discontinued at the end of August 2025 and being replaced by FreeStyle Libre® 2 Plus sensors. Adults and children & young people who are currently prescribed FreeStyle Libre® 2 sensors will need to be changed to FreeStyle Libre® 2 Plus sensors before the discontinuation date.

#### Actions:

- Please see **Attachment 1** for memo and actions to be taken
- Please see **Attachment 2** for location of searches to identify patients requiring switching.

### Illicit drugs containing lethal potent synthetic opioids

Intelligence from Metropolitan Police suggests there are supplies of cocaine and heroin containing lethal potent synthetic opioids by Woolwich Dockyard, causing non-fatal overdoses and requiring the use of Naloxone. There are concerns that drug users are now at risk of a fatal overdose. Practices should to report any drug concerns through the Local Drug Information System (LDIS) and email [Drug.Alerts@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:Drug.Alerts@royalgreenwich.gov.uk) to access the [Via Greenwich](#) treatment service for support.

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### Greenwich Pharmacy First Plus (April 2025 – October 2025)

The Greenwich Medicines Optimisation Team and Community Pharmacies are working in collaboration to improve accessibility and support vulnerable patients in accessing medicines.

Practices can create an EMIS Local Services referral for the **common 26 selected minor ailments** from **April 2025 to October 2025**, where socially vulnerable patients will be provided with professional health care advice and where clinically appropriate over the counter medicines and vitamin D supplements **free of charge** from participating Greenwich pharmacies.

- For more information on the 26 minor ailments and patient criteria covered under the scheme, click [here](#);
- For a current list of Greenwich community pharmacies participating to provide the scheme, click [here](#);
- For more information on all Pharmacy First Services available in Greenwich, click [here](#);
- Pharmacy contractors who have not signed up to provide the scheme yet, can do so via an [agreement Form](#)

### Optimise Rx

Optimise Rx in EMIS Web supports safer, patient-specific, evidence-based and cost-effective prescribing. Greenwich practices saved £133,956 with a 12% message acceptance rate, but £1,024,407 in potential savings remain. Biggest savings came from switching Buprenorphine 5mcg/hr patches to a brand; the largest missed opportunity was with 10mcg/hr patches. The most accepted message was switching to a lower carbon footprint salbutamol inhaler.

Practices are encouraged to provide reasons when rejecting messages to help identify barriers to implementation.

The Optimise Rx most missed savings for June are:

1. Januvia 100mg tablets – consider sitagliptin 100mg tablets
2. Buprenorphine 10 and 20microgram/hour 7 day patches – consider switching to Bunov®, Reletrans® or Sevodyne®
3. DPP-4 inhibitors - consider sitagliptin for new patients
4. Doxazosin 8mg tablets - consider 2 x 4mg tablets

### Estriol 0.01% vaginal cream 80g switch to Estriol 0.1% (1mg/g) vaginal cream 15g

Prescribing Estriol 0.1% (1mg/g) cream offers significant cost savings. Though in a smaller pack, it delivers the same 0.5mg dose per application as the 0.01% cream and lasts twice as long. This reduces ordering frequency and is more environmentally friendly. Full details are below:

Estriol 0.01% vaginal cream	Estriol 0.1% (1mg/g) vaginal cream
Previously Gynest®, now only available as generic.	Previously Ovestin®, now only available as generic.
One applicator is 500mcg (in 5ml).	One applicator is 500mcg (in 0.5ml). <b>Delivers in a smaller volume the same dose per applicator as 0.01% cream.</b>
Costs £57.25 per 16 dose tube (80g tube)	Costs £5.45 per 30 dose tube (15g tube) <b>Preferred strength and most cost-effective option.</b>

The use of Estriol 0.1% (1mg/g) vaginal cream is supported by the [SEL Urology Adult Primary Care Guidelines](#) and the [SEL Gynaecology Network: Primary Care Guidelines](#). OptimiseRX messages are active to help facilitate this switch.

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### Greenwich Combined Wound care formulary

The [Greenwich combined wound care formulary](#) and [Greenwich Prescription Request from Care Home Nurses for selected dressings from the Primary Care Wound Formulary](#) have been updated.

#### Actions:

- Please disseminate to all relevant clinical staff

### Travel Vaccine Review

Please see **Attachment 3** for Travel Vaccines Review and action as appropriate.

### Medicines Supply Issues

#### Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs)

If the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) decide there is a serious shortage of a specific medicine, then an SSP may be issued. The following SSPs have been issued for:

- [Estradot® \(estradiol\) 25microgram/24 hours transdermal patch](#) – 3 April to 10 October 2025
- [Estradot® \(estradiol\) 50micrograms/24 hours transdermal patch](#) – 19 December 2024 to 10 October 2025
- [Estradot® \(estradiol\) 75micrograms/24 hours transdermal patch](#) - 19 December 2024 to 10 October 2025
- [Estradot® \(estradiol\) 100micrograms/24 hours transdermal patch](#) – 19 December 2024 to 10 October 2025
- [Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free](#) – 8 May to 8 August 2025
- [Creon® 25000 capsules](#) – 24 May 2024 to 21 November 2025
- [Creon® 10000 capsules](#) – 24 May 2024 to 21 November 2025

#### Medicines Shortages: Medicine Supply Notification (MSN)

The contents of MSNs can be viewed on the [Medicines Supply Tool](#). To access the tool you will be required to register with the SPS. MSNs have been issued for the following:

- Tier 2 MSN for Abidec® multivitamin drops
- Tier 2 MSN for Amiodarone 200mg tablets
- Tier 2 MSN for Diclofenac (Voltarol® Ophtha) 0.1% eye drops 0.3ml unit dose preservative free
- Tier 2 MSN for Salbutamol 100micrograms/dose breath actuated inhalers CFC free
- Tier 2 MSN for Betamethasone 500microgram soluble tablets sugar free

#### Shortage of bumetanide 1mg tablets

In response to the [National Patient Safety Alert](#) on 3 July 2025 regarding the shortage of Bumetanide 1mg tablets, the SEL Cardiovascular Medicines Working Group (CVMWG) has issued a memo ([Bumetanide 1mg Shortage](#)).

Approximately 2,500 patients across SEL are prescribed Bumetanide 1mg. Some may have enough stock until the expected resupply in mid-August. Practices can use Ardens Manager to identify and review affected patients.

The Ardens Manager search is available via: **Ardens Manager>Alerts>CAS>2025 ?Consider alternative as supply shortage – switch bumetanide 1mg to furosemide**

### PrescQIPP Updates

**Bulletin 368. Antioxidant vitamins for AMD** – This updated bulletin offers guidance and resources for reviewing antioxidant supplements used to prevent age-related macular degeneration.

**Bulletin 360: Anticholinergic burden** – This updated bulletin provides guidance on safely reviewing and deprescribing anticholinergic medications where appropriate.

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### Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS)

- To access SPS publications, please register or login [here](#).
- For new guidance published in June please see [here](#) i
- For Medicines Safety updates see [here](#), including information on [British Menopause Society guidance on the use of incretin-based therapies in women using hormone replacement therapy \(HRT\)](#) and SPC changes for [Senokot®](#) products which are now contraindicated in pregnancy.

### Medicines Safety

Please see **Attachment 4** for National Patient safety alert on potential contamination of non-sterile alcohol-free skin cleansing wipes with *Burkholderia spp.*

#### MHRA Drug Safety Update June 2025

**Abrysvo ▼ (Pfizer RSV vaccine) and Arexvy ▼ (GSK RSV vaccine): be alert to a small risk of Guillain-Barré syndrome following vaccination in older adults** - There is a small increase in the risk of Guillain-Barré syndrome following vaccination with Abrysvo (Pfizer respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine) and Arexvy (GSK RSV vaccine) in adults aged 60 years and older. Healthcare professionals should advise all recipients of Abrysvo and Arexvy that they should be alert to signs and symptoms of Guillain-Barré syndrome and, if they occur, to seek immediate medical attention as it requires urgent treatment in hospital

#### MHRA Class 2 Medicines Recall: Depo-Medrone 80 mg/2 mL

A batch of Depo-Medrone has been released to the market with an error. The vial over label incorrectly states that the total vial content is 40mg/1 mL, when the correct total vial content is 80mg/2mL (with a concentration of 40mg/ml of methylprednisolone acetate).

Full information can be found [here](#).

### New and Updated NICE Guidelines

- [NICE Technology Appraisal Guidance \[TA1075\] Dapagliflozin for treating chronic kidney disease](#)

### BNF Update

#### Significant changes

[Antibacterials, principles of therapy](#) - updated guidance on notifiable diseases

[Asthma, acute](#) - update to criteria for severity of acute asthma attacks.

[Immunisation schedule](#) - updated guidance for immunisation against respiratory syncytial virus.

[Ivacaftor with tezacaftor and elexacaftor \(Kaftrio®\)](#) - risk of psychological side effects.

[Obstetrics](#) - update to treatment of postpartum haemorrhage. Ocular corticosteroids - cautions updated

Ocular NSAIDs - cautions updated (see example in [bromfenac](#)).

[Posaconazole](#) - update to indications and dose, and important safety information.

[Respiratory syncytial virus immunisation](#) - updated guidance.

[Salbutamol](#) and [Terbutaline sulfate](#) - reminder of the risks from overuse in asthma and to be aware of changes in the SABA prescribing guidelines

Thiopurines and intrahepatic cholestasis of pregnancy (see example in [azathioprine](#))

## Contact Details

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**Quality Alert reporting form** can be found [here](#)