

Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Guidance

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Safety guidance

- MHRA Fluoroquinolone antibiotics: must now only be prescribed when other commonly recommended antibiotics are inappropriate** [LINK](#)

This follows a review by the MHRA which looked at the effectiveness of current measures to reduce the identified risk of disabling and potentially long-lasting or irreversible side effects. See advice for healthcare professional via link above.

Data from Open Prescribing, for total number of ciprofloxacin items issued, shows Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB to be one of the top prescribers of ciprofloxacin in England.

- Omega-3-acid ethyl ester medicines (Omacor/Teromeg 1000mg capsules): dose-dependent increased risk of atrial fibrillation in patients with established cardiovascular diseases or cardiovascular risk factors** [LINK](#)

Systematic reviews and meta-analyses of randomised controlled trials have highlighted a dose-dependent increased risk of atrial fibrillation in patients with established cardiovascular diseases or cardiovascular risk factors treated with omega-3-acid ethyl ester medicines compared to placebo.

Local guidance

- Menopause Pathway – Guidance on management and prescribing** [LINK](#)

The new HIOW ICB menopause pathway is now available on the ICB website. Please see link above for recommendations and formulary choices.

- Shortage of lidocaine 1% (or 2%) with adrenaline 1:200 000** [LINK](#)

Please see the link for advice on how to manage the shortage of lidocaine 1% (or 2%) with adrenaline 1:200 in primary care.

- Levetiracetam granules** [LINK](#)

There are now two different versions of levetiracetam granules available:

- Desitrend®** coated granules, which can be swallowed with liquid or food and are licensed to be administered in a feeding tube with 10ml of water.
- Neuraxpharm®** granules are designed to be dissolved in a glass of water and are not licensed to be administered in a feeding tube, so they may not be suitable for some patients

with epilepsy if they have swallowing difficulties, use a feeding tube or are on a ketogenic diet.

Please consider prescribing by brand name to ensure the correct product is prescribed and supplied.

National guidance

6. The British HIV Association (BHIVA) rapid guidance on the use of statins for primary prevention of cardiovascular disease (CVD) in people living with HIV [LINK](#)

BHIVA have produced new guidance for the use of statins for primary prevention of CVD in people living with HIV. General population CVD risk calculators may underestimate risk in people living with HIV. Therefore, these guidelines recommend, for patients living with HIV aged over 40 years or older should be prescribed a statin for primary prevention of CVD, irrespective of estimated CVD risk or lipid profile. The guidance recommends pitavastatin, but as this is not available in UK, BHIVA recommend the use of atorvastatin 20mg daily as an alternative. The guidance also suggests that people on a low-intensity statin should switch to one of moderate intensity if clinically appropriate and tolerated.

Statin	Low intensity	Moderate intensity	High intensity
Atorvastatin	n/a	10–20 mg	40–80 mg
Fluvastatin	20–40 mg	80 mg	n/a
Lovastatin	20 mg	40–80 mg	n/a
Pitavastatin	n/a	1–4 mg	n/a
Pravastatin	10–20 mg	40–80 mg	n/a
Rosuvastatin	n/a	5–10 mg	20–40 mg
Simvastatin	10 mg	20–40 mg	n/a

For people unable to tolerate a statin, the guidelines advise offering an alternative lipid-lowering agent in line with national guidelines. It is best practice for statins for primary prevention to be prescribed and monitored in primary care.

Prescribers may need to consider drug interactions. Please see the Liverpool University HIV Drug Interactions website for further information about drug–drug interactions:

[Liverpool HIV Interactions \(hiv-druginteractions.org\)](http://hiv-druginteractions.org)

For further advice please contact Solent Sexual Health Services:

Southampton: SHSSotonHIV@solent.nhs.uk

Portsmouth and IOW: SHSPortsHIV@solent.nhs.uk

North Hampshire: SHSNorthHIV@solent.nhs.uk

7. UKHSA: Emergence of new *Clostridioides difficile* ribotype

Microbiological sensitivity testing has identified that *Clostridioides difficile* ribotype 955 isolates are resistant to treatment with metronidazole and therefore the use of this agent will be ineffective for treating *C. difficile* infections (CDI).

Healthcare professionals should be aware of this new *C.diff* ribotype. They are also reminded that NICE guidelines for the assessment and treatment of CDI [LINK](#) or SCAN guidelines for CDI

management/treatment [LINK](#) should be followed. Metronidazole should NOT be used for treatment of CDI. Further information on CDI diagnosis, management and disease surveillance are available from the UKHSA. [LINK](#) Patients not responding to standard treatment with vancomycin, may require treatment escalation to second- or third-line treatment options based on NICE/SCAN recommendations.

Note: Optimise Rx already displays an alert to highlight to prescribers who are trying to prescribe metronidazole for CDI (assuming coding is correct), that vancomycin is the first line treatment in first episode of CDI.

8. The NEWT Guidelines for swallowing difficulties [LINK](#)

The NEWT Guidelines have published new advice for swallowing difficulties on their website. To access these guidelines please use the link above. However for individual drug monographs and more extensive use of the website, please obtain the HIOW ICB login details from your medicines optimisation team representative.

9. National measles guidelines updated [LINK](#)

Document provides guidance on risk assessment of suspected measles cases, management of contacts and a description of the available laboratory testing services. It includes updated information relating to immunosuppressed patients in Group B and updated differential diagnoses.

10. SPS: St. Mark's electrolyte solution [LINK](#)

St Mark's solution is an oral rehydration solution, which maintains fluid balance in conditions like short bowel syndrome. Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) has provided updated guidance on its preparation and use. As a reminder, St Mark's solution uses ingredients which are available to buy in supermarkets or local pharmacies: glucose powder, bicarbonate of soda and table salt.

NICE guidelines

11. Suspected sepsis: recognition, diagnosis and early management – updated guidance (NG51) [LINK](#)

This updated guidance for health professionals makes new recommendations how to manage cases of suspected measles: what patient details to take, who to notify and assessing risk of disease spreading in close contacts. The guidance covers:

- how to decide if a suspected case of measles is 'likely' or 'unlikely'
- case management – what lab tests should be done and the importance of oral fluid testing on all suspected cases
- measles control – identifying vulnerable contacts and assessing their need for post-exposure prophylaxis

Other

12. Educational Webinar - medicines optimisation in people with a learning disability and/or autism

The Hampshire and IoW Medicines Optimisation team recently hosted an educational webinar on medicines optimisation in people with a learning disability and/or autism. Please contact the IoW medicines optimisation team for a link to the recording: hiowicb-hsi.mot@nhs.net

13. Pharmacy First launches [LINK](#)

Over 10,000 NHS pharmacies now offer treatment for seven common conditions:

- sinusitis
- sore throat
- earache
- infected insect bite, impetigo
- shingles
- uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women (under the age of 65)

The scheme allows access to consultation and treatment without the need for a GP appointment or prescription. For service specification see [LINK](#)

14. Emergency ordering service for community pharmacies for fidaxomicin to treat *Clostridioides difficile* infection (CDI)

It was highlighted that there have been a few patients who have not been able to fill their prescription for fidaxomicin (second-line option to treat CDI - [SCAN link](#) at community pharmacies nearer to the weekend due to delivery schedules. South Central Antimicrobial Network (SCAN) have been in discussions with the manufacturers of fidaxomicin who will now provide the following service.

*"In the event that fidaxomicin is required more urgently than would be supplied through your standard service, an emergency ordering service is available. To access this, please call Alliance customer service on **0330 100 0449** and **enter your Alliance account number** when prompted. You will be directed to the out of hours security company who will transfer your call to your local Alliance service centre. Alliance will arrange a courier to deliver the medication within 12 hours. **You will not be charged for using this emergency ordering service.**"*

The full details of the emergency ordering service have been shared with our community pharmacies via Community Pharmacy South Central.

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On behalf of Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB Medicines Optimisation Teams**

Local medicines optimisation teams can be contacted via their generic team mailbox: See [LINK](#)

Previous bulletins can be found hosted on the ICS website here: [link](#)