



# Tablet Press

The prescribing newsletter for GPs, nurses and pharmacists



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## Happy New Year



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### • Pfizer fined record £84.2m for overcharging NHS

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has fined Pfizer £84.2m and Flynn Pharma £5.2m for the 2,600% overnight price increase of phenytoin in 2012. NHS spending on the capsules, used by 48,000 UK patients, rose from £2m a year in 2012 to about £50m in 2013. Before 2012, Pfizer manufactured and distributed the drug, branded as Epanutin. Pfizer then sold the UK rights to distribute the phenytoin sodium capsules to Flynn Pharma, which de-branded the drug. That allowed the firms to charge more for the drug because it was no longer subject to the pricing scheme agreed between the NHS and the drugs industry. Pfizer and Flynn have said they will appeal against the decision. The government is seeking to tighten up regulation of generic drugs price rises. The Health Service Medical Supplies (Costs) Bill has passed its third reading in the House of Commons. Representatives from Corby CCG and Nene CCG were instrumental in flagging up this issue to the CMA and the Office of Fair Trading (OFT).

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-38233852> . The BMJ also had an article on this subject in its 14<sup>th</sup> December edition <http://www.bmj.com/content/355/bmj.i6712>

### • New NICE guidance on ticagrelor after myocardial infarction (TA420)

Ticagrelor **60 mg** twice daily is recommended when extended treatment is needed for patients with a history of myocardial infarction of at least 1 year and a high risk of an atherothrombotic event. Treatment may be started without interruption (continuation therapy) after the initial 1-year treatment with ticagrelor 90 mg or other adenosine diphosphate (ADP) receptor inhibitor therapy in patients with acute coronary syndromes and with a high risk of an atherothrombotic event. Treatment can also be started up to 2 years after the myocardial infarction, or within 1 year after stopping previous ADP receptor inhibitor treatment.

Unless contraindicated, ticagrelor should always be given with a daily low maintenance dose of aspirin 75 mg to 150 mg. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta420>

### • The risk of myocardial infarction with antipsychotics

A systematic review and meta-analysis of 9 observational studies found that taking antipsychotic medicines almost doubled the risk of having a myocardial infarction (MI). The risk was greatest within the first 30 days of exposure to an antipsychotic medicine. Despite its limitations, the review highlights the importance of continuing to follow current advice that these medicines should be used with caution in people with cardiovascular disease. The NICE guideline on psychosis and schizophrenia in adults recommends that various cardiovascular assessments should be carried out before starting an antipsychotic medicine and that ongoing monitoring should continue during treatment. The guideline on dementia, produced jointly by NICE and the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), advises against using antipsychotic medicines for non-cognitive symptoms or challenging behaviour of dementia unless the person is severely distressed or there is an immediate risk of harm to them or others. [link](#)

### • Clinical Pharmacy in General Practice

In July 2015, a pilot was launched to kick start the expansion of clinical pharmacy in general practice. By December 2016, over 490 additional clinical pharmacists were working across approximately 650 GP practices across the country. Following the success of the pilot, NHS England is inviting GP practices and other providers of general medical services to apply for funding to help recruit, train and develop more clinical pharmacists to meet the commitment of an additional 1,500 clinical pharmacists in general practice by 2020/21, as set out in the General Practice Forward View. Provider organisations will be able to submit applications through an online portal available via [www.england.nhs.uk](http://www.england.nhs.uk) from 9 January 2017.

### • Alimemazine

Due to the increases in the price of alimemazine local dermatologists have suggested that promethazine (liquid available) and hydroxyzine are suitable alternative sedating antihistamines for patients who have already tried chlorphenamine. Do not prescribe hydroxyzine to people with a prolonged QT interval or risk factors for QT interval prolongation. The most recent prices are:

Alimemazine 10mg tablet	£112.85 for 28
Alimemazine 30mg/5ml oral solution	£243.51 for 100mls
Alimemazine 7.5mg/5ml oral solution	£179.54 for 100mls
Promethazine 5mg/5ml oral solution s/f	£2.85 for 100mls
Promethazine 10mg tablet	£2.96 for 56
Promethazine 25mg	£4.65 for 28
Hydroxyzine 10mg tablet	£1.20 for 84
Hydroxyzine 25mg table	£0.62 for 28

This edition is also available on PathfinderRF via the following link

<http://nww.pathfinder-rf.northants.nhs.uk/nene>

#### Disclaimer

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