



- **Metformin for patients with moderately reduced kidney function**

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) has concluded that metformin-containing medicines can now be used in patients with moderately reduced kidney function (GFR [glomerular filtration rate] = 30–59 ml/min) for the treatment of type 2 diabetes. Whilst metformin may increase the risk of a rare, but serious complication, called lactic acidosis after considering the scientific literature, clinical data, epidemiological studies and clinical guidelines from medical bodies, the EMA concluded that the large patient population with moderately reduced kidney function can benefit from use of metformin. Clear dosing recommendations and monitoring before and during treatment aim to minimise any possible increased risk in these patients. **The contraindication for patients with severely reduced kidney function will remain (GFR less than 30 ml/min).** Whilst NICE guidance has been advocating the use of metformin for patients with moderately reduced kidney function for several years, this change in EMA guidance means that prescribing for this group will now be covered within the product licences.

- **Reporting of pregnancies in women who have taken ulipristal 30mg (ellaOne®)**

Whilst ulipristal 30mg (ellaOne®) significantly reduces the risk of pregnancy following unprotected sexual intercourse, or contraceptive failure, it does not prevent all pregnancies. Health care professionals who become aware of any woman who has inadvertently taken ellaOne® during her pregnancy, or has become pregnant, despite having taken ellaOne® should report this on the following link

www.hra-pregnancy-registry.com

- **Quadrivalent Inactivated Influenza Vaccines (QIV)**

A number of enquiries have been received from GP about Quadrivalent Inactivated Influenza Vaccines (QIV) due to it being promoted by pharmaceutical companies for the 2017/18 season. Use of the quadrivalent vaccine in adults is currently under review by Public Health England (PHE) and the JCVI who will be reviewing cost effectiveness in the adult high risk population. Until a decision is made nationally around cost effectiveness of the quadrivalent vaccine and a decision made around which patient groups will benefit most, **it is recommended that trivalent vaccines should be ordered for adult at-risk patients for the winter flu season 17/18.** It is likely that it is more important to increase flu vaccine uptake in the clinical at risk groups because of an increased risk of death and serious illness if people in these groups catch flu, rather than the type of vaccine offered.

Note - Influenza B is relatively more common in children, so the vaccines centrally purchased for the childhood programme in recent years have been quadrivalent preparations (Fluenz Tetra® and Fluorix Tetra®). The childhood programme should therefore contribute to better control of influenza B overall, by reducing transmission across the population.

- **Boots charging “handling fee” for dispensing denosumab injection and cinacalcet tablets.**

Nationally it has been highlighted that Boots are charging the NHS a £20 “handling fee” for dispensing denosumab injection and cinacalcet tablets. Locally Boots suggested that they are “passing on” this “handling charge” as they are being charged this from their wholesaler, Alliance. Whilst, other wholesalers do not charge a handling fee e.g. Movianto, Boots currently have no intention of using an alternative wholesaler. This is probably because Alliance Wholesalers is part of the Boots group. Pharmacies can order denosumab injections and cinacalcet directly from Movianto on 01234 248631. Practices can also order denosumab injection from Movianto. and supply as a personally administered item. No discount is available from Movianto. The injections should be stored in the medicine refrigerator (2°C - 8°C).

- **PGDs now available for vaccines frequently recommended for travel**

The following PGDs have been approved for following vaccines:

- Combined Hepatitis A and Typhoid vaccine
- Hepatitis A vaccine – Adults (16 years and over)
- Hepatitis A vaccine – Paediatric (from 12 months of age up to 15 years of age)
- Typhoid Vaccine

These PGDs are available on Pathfinder

PGDs can only be used once the nurse and their manager have signed the authorisation sheet within the PGD. A Patient Group Direction Authorisation form for multiple PGDs can be found on Pathfinder <http://nww.pathfinder-rf.northants.nhs.uk/nene/therapeutics/patient-group-directions/>

This edition is also available on PathfinderRF via the following link

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

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