



Issue: 135



# Tablet Press

The prescribing newsletter for GPs, nurses and pharmacists  
NHS Nene CCG and NHS Corby CCG



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## • Influenza Vaccines

A number of enquiries have been received from GP practices about which influenza vaccine they should be ordering for vaccinating patients in 18/19, now that adjuvanted trivalent vaccine and Quadrivalent Inactivated Influenza Vaccines (QIV) are available, as well as the standard trivalent vaccine.

- Quadrivalent Inactivated Influenza Vaccines (QIV) - Modelling done by Public Health England (PHE) suggests that since the introduction of the quadrivalent vaccine to the childhood programme there are relatively small health benefits to be gained in the elderly by the use of quadrivalent vaccines. However the benefit is more substantial in at risk adults under 65 years of age, including pregnant women.
- Adjuvanted trivalent vaccine – the JCVI have advised that adjuvanted TIV is cost-effective for over 65s. It is now for NHS England to decide if this particular vaccine is recommended in the national programme. If there is a change in policy it is likely that the over 75s will be the priority.

It has been highlighted to PHE and NHSE that GP practices require clarification as soon as possible about which vaccines to order. It has been advised that if GP practices are able to hold-off ordering for now then hopefully more advice will be forthcoming imminently. Part of the issue is that NHSE are aware that making any changes for a sub-section of the adult population adds complexity to the programme

## • New preparation of enoxaparin

A new biosimilar preparation of enoxaparin (Inhixa) is now available. Biosimilar medicines are medicines that are made or derived from a biological source and as such are complex, with inherent variability in their structure. Biosimilar medicines are not considered generic equivalents to their originator biological medicine because the two products are similar but not identical. However, they will have met regulatory requirements in terms of comparative quality, safety and efficacy.

The MHRA has advised that all biological medicines including biosimilar medicines must be prescribed by **brand name** to support on-going pharmacovigilance of the individual products. Therefore enoxaparin **should not** be prescribed generically but as the brand: Clexane or Inhixa.

## • Fidaxomicin

Some GPs have asked for clarification on prescribing of fidaxomicin. Fidaxomicin is an antibiotic which is used to treat resistant or recurrent cases of Clostridium Difficile diarrhoea. NPAG has classified it as amber 2 and it should only be prescribed on the advice of a consultant microbiologist.

## • New NICE guidance on Sinusitis

A visual summary of the recent NICE guidance on sinusitis has been published. This includes advice on self care, symptom control, when antibiotics are and are not recommended and antibiotic choice. [link](#). Antibiotic advice is in line with the latest Public Health England advice.

## • Manufacturing shortage of Stanek

Stanek is a combination formulation of Levodopa/Carbidopa/Entacapone. There is a manufacturing problem with Stanek especially the most commonly prescribed dose: 100/25/200mg. **If your patient cannot obtain supplies of Stanek, then please prescribe either Stalevo or Sastravi at identical doses instead. If all these are unavailable, then it may be necessary to use Co-Careldopa (at the nearest possible dose) with Entacapone 200mg tablets instead.**

Example: Stanek 100/25/200mg QDS should be re-prescribed as Co-Careldopa 25/100mg QDS plus Entacapone 200mg QDS, temporarily, until supplies of Stanek, Stalevo or Sastravi are available.

Please be aware that this approach may cause difficulties for some patients with dysphagia given the large size of Entacapone tablets, or for patients with cognitive deficits who may require some explanation about the change. If exact dose equivalents are not available please refer the patient to the PDNS service for advice.

# Merry Christmas

This edition is also available on PathfinderRF via the following link

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

### Disclaimer

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