

Lincolnshire Prescribing and Clinical Effectiveness Bulletin

Volume 9; Number 11

July 2015

What's new this month?

- The *Pevanti* range of prednisolone tablets (2.5mg, 5mg, 10mg, 20mg and 25mg) are designated RED-RED and have not been approved for inclusion in the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary*. While reducing the tablet burden appears attractive, regular dose titration is better managed using the established narrower range of generic standard release prednisolone tablets. PACEF were concerned that patients taking their dose in multiples of 5mg tablets could be easily confused by new higher strength formulations and be at increased risk of unintentional overdose (see page 3).
- Prescribers are reminded of the exceptionally high price of prednisolone soluble tablets 5mg and advised to review all current prescriptions. Both prednisolone 1mg and 5mg plain tablets are relatively small and do not present swallowing issues for most patients. Additionally, prednisolone 1mg and 5mg plain tablets can be dispersed in water to make a fine suspension (unlicensed use). Soluble prednisolone tablets may be justified in a limited range of clinical situations (e.g. in those with fine bore enteral feeding tubes). The potential saving in Lincolnshire if only 50% of existing prescriptions were changed to prednisolone plain tablets is over £120,000 (see page 4).
- A new lower cost modified release gliclazide product (*Vamju*) offers a second line alternative to generic gliclazide 80mg tablets (see page 5).
- Two new branded pregabalin capsule formulations are evaluated (*Lecaent* and *Rewisca*); only *Rewisca* is approved for use (see page 6).
- *Vascalpha* is an exceptionally high cost brand of modified release felodipine tablets and should not be prescribed; designation RED-RED (see page 7).
- Low cost generic standard release quetiapine tablets remain the preferred first line option in most patients where quetiapine is clinically indicated. However, lower cost modified release brands of quetiapine are now available and should be preferred in patients requiring a modified release product. The lower cost brands approved by PACEF and included in the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary* are *Ebesque XL*, *Biquelle XL*, *Mintreleq XL* and *Zaluron XL*; of these, *Biquelle XL*, *Mintreleq XL* and *Zaluron XL* are the lowest cost. All of these products are designated GREEN in all strengths. Practices currently prescribing higher cost modified release quetiapine preparations are urged to review their position with a view to switching to their preferred lower cost brand. Lower cost MR quetiapine should be prescribed by brand name to ensure a lower NHS reimbursement price is paid. Practices are advised not to issue open generic prescriptions for quetiapine MR or to issue branded prescriptions for higher cost products such as *Seroquel XL*, *Seotiapim XL*, *Sondate XL*, and *Tenprolide XL*. All of these products are designated RED-RED and none are included on the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary* (see page 8).
- Rivaroxaban 2.5mg tablets (*Xarelto*) are designated GREEN for use in combination with aspirin plus clopidogrel or aspirin alone, for preventing atherothrombotic events in people who have had an acute coronary syndrome with elevated cardiac biomarkers (see page 10).

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SUMMARY OF PACEF DECISIONS: JUNE 2015 UPDATE

Drug	Indication(s)	Traffic Light and Joint Formulary Status
Amlodipine 5mg and 10mg tablets (generic)	For the treatment of hypertension.	GREEN Included in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i> for first line use in hypertension.
Felodipine 2.5mg, 5mg and 10mg modified release tablets (generic)	For the treatment of hypertension.	GREEN Included in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i> for second line use in hypertension.
Felodipine 5mg and 10mg modified release tablets (<i>Vascalpha</i>)	For the treatment of hypertension.	RED-RED Not approved for inclusion in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i> for this indication.
Gliclazide modified release tablets 30mg and 60mg (<i>Vamju</i>) (Amdipharm Mercury)	For the treatment of type 2 diabetes mellitus	GREEN Approved for inclusion in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i> . Second line sulfonylurea for consideration in those intolerant to gliclazide tablets 80mg.
Lercanidipine 10mg and 20mg tablets (generic)	For mild to moderate hypertension	GREEN Included in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i> for first line use for mild to moderate hypertension.
Obinutuzumab infusion (Gazyvaro) (Roche Products Ltd)	For use in combination with chlorambucil for the treatment of adult patients with previously untreated chronic lymphocytic leukaemia and with co-morbidities making them unsuitable for full dose fludarabine based therapy.	RED Approved for inclusion in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i> for this indication.
Ofatumumab infusion (<i>Arzerra</i>) (Novartis Pharmaceuticals UK Ltd)	For use in combination with chlorambucil for the treatment of chronic lymphocytic leukaemia for patients who have not received prior therapy and who are not eligible for fludarabine based therapy.	RED Approved for inclusion in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i> for this indication.
Prednisolone 2.5mg, 5mg, 10mg, 20mg and 25mg tablets (<i>Pevanti</i>) (Amdipharm Mercury)	For the treatment and/or suppression of allergic and inflammatory disorders.	RED-RED Not approved for inclusion in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i>
Pregabalin capsules 25mg, 50mg, 75mg, 100mg, 150mg, 200mg, 225mg, 300mg (<i>Lecaent</i>) (Actavis UK Ltd)	For use as adjunctive therapy in adults with partial seizures with or without secondary generalisation and for the treatment of Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD) in adults.	RED-RED Not approved for inclusion in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i>
Pregabalin capsules 25mg, 50mg, 75mg, 100mg, 150mg, 200mg, 225mg, 300mg	For use as adjunctive therapy in adults with partial seizures with or without secondary generalisation	GREEN Approved for inclusion in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i>

(<i>Rewisca</i>) (Consilient Health Ltd)	and for the treatment of Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD) in adults.	
Quetiapine modified release tablets 50mg, 150mg, 200mg, 300mg and 400mg (<i>Mintreleq XL</i>) (CEB Pharma Ltd)	For the treatment of schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and add-on treatment of major depressive episodes in patients with major depressive disorder	GREEN Approved for inclusion in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i> . Prescribe by brand. Standard release quetiapine preferred first line.
Rivaroxaban 2.5mg tablets (Xarelto)(Bayer)	For use in combination with aspirin or aspirin and clopidogrel for prevention of atherothrombotic events after acute coronary syndromes in patients with elevated cardiac biomarkers	GREEN Approved for inclusion in the <i>Lincolnshire Joint Formulary</i> for this indication.

This bulletin has been created specifically to convey details of decisions taken at the Prescribing and Clinical Effectiveness Forum (PACEF) to all stakeholders across the Lincolnshire Healthcare Community in both primary and secondary care. Back issues of the *PACE Bulletin* and other PACEF publications are available through the PACEF website (<http://lincolnshire-pacef.nhs.uk>); follow the commissioning link to PACEF. Electronic copies of the *PACE Bulletin* are circulated to a wide readership via email. If you are not currently on our distribution list and wish to receive regular copies of PACEF publications please contact Sandra France on sandra.france@gemcsu.nhs.uk.

Google searching can be a quick and effective way of finding back numbers of the *PACE Bulletin* relevant to a specific topic of interest. Searchers are advised to use the official version of the *Bulletin* available from the PACEF website rather than depend on a potentially unreliable draft or variant found through Google or an alternative search engine.

The *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary* is available on line and is fully searchable; it can be accessed at www.lincolnshirejointformulary.nhs.uk

RED-RED: This signifies that a product is **not recommended** for prescribing in **either** primary or secondary care. All new products are classified as RED-RED pending assessment by PACEF.
RED: This signifies that a product has been approved for use within secondary care, tertiary care or a primary care hosted specialist service only and **should not be routinely prescribed in primary care**. RED drugs may be used within ULHT or LPFT subject to approval for use within each Trust. ULHT and LPFT reserve the right to determine whether or not RED drugs will be used within their Trusts. RED classification does not automatically signify that a drug will be available within secondary/tertiary care.
AMBER: This signifies that a drug has been approved for use in primary care **subject to specialist initiation; a shared care guideline (SCG) may also be required**. The main purpose of the SCG will be to clearly define both specialist and GP responsibilities. Not all AMBER drugs that require SCGs are currently covered by formal documents; PACEF are working to rectify this.
GREEN: This signifies a product that is **approved for initiation in either primary or secondary care**.

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RAPID DRUG ASSESSMENT: PREDNISOLONE 2.5MG, 5MG, 10MG, 20MG AND 25MG TABLETS (PEVANTI)

The *Pevanti* range of higher strength prednisolone tablets may help to reduce tablet burden, but the risk of over-dose through strength confusion is too great.

Amdipharm Mercury have launched a new range of immediate release prednisolone tablets under the brand name *Pevanti*, introducing, for the first time, a 10mg and 20mg tablet. The new strengths are promoted as a way of reducing both the tablet burden and the cost compared to generic immediate release prednisolone tablets.

A cost comparison reveals the following:

	Dose	Cost (28 days)
Prednisolone 2.5mg tablets (<i>Pevanti</i>) (Amdipharm Mercury)	2.5mg daily	£1.38
Prednisolone 2.5mg gastro-resistant tablets (generic)	2.5mg daily	£1.52
Prednisolone 5mg tablets (generic)	5mg daily	£1.24
Prednisolone 5mg tablets (<i>Pevanti</i>) (Amdipharm Mercury)	5mg daily	£1.06
Prednisolone 5mg gastro-resistant tablets (generic)	5mg daily	£1.61

Prednisolone 5mg soluble tablets (generic)	5mg daily	£49.91
Prednisolone 10mg tablets (Pevanti) (Amdipharm Mercury)	10mg daily	£2.13
Prednisolone 5mg tablets (generic)	10mg daily	£2.48
Prednisolone 20mg tablets (Pevanti) (Amdipharm Mercury)	20mg daily	£4.25
Prednisolone 5mg tablets (generic)	20mg daily	£4.96
Prednisolone 25mg tablets (Pevanti) (Amdipharm Mercury)	25mg daily	£20.00
Prednisolone 25mg tablets (generic)	25mg daily	£37.50

Reference: *Drug Tariff* (July 2015)

PACEF Recommendation:

Branded prescribing of the *Pevanti* range of standard release prednisolone tablets is modestly lower in cost than equivalent generic products. While reducing the tablet burden appears attractive, regular dose titration is better managed using the established narrower range of generic standard release prednisolone tablets. PACEF were concerned that patients taking their dose in multiples of 5mg tablets could be easily confused by new higher strength formulations and be at increased risk of unintentional overdose. As a result of this, the *Pevanti* range of prednisolone tablets (2.5mg, 5mg, 10mg, 20mg and 25mg) are designated RED-RED and have not been approved for inclusion in the Lincolnshire Joint Formulary.

QIPP OPPORTUNITY: PREDNISOLONE – USE PLAIN NOT SOLUBLE TABLETS

Prescribing plain prednisolone 5mg tablets rather than prednisolone 5mg soluble tablets could generate QIPP savings of at least £120,000pa in Lincolnshire.

Prescribers are reminded of the exceptionally high price of prednisolone soluble tablets 5mg and advised to review all current prescriptions. A cost comparison reveals the scale of the problem:

	Dose	Cost (28 days)
Prednisolone 5mg tablets (generic)	5mg daily	£1.24
Prednisolone 5mg soluble tablets (generic)	5mg daily	£49.91

Both prednisolone 1mg and 5mg plain tablets are relatively small and do not present swallowing issues for most patients. Additionally, prednisolone 1mg and 5mg plain tablets can be dispersed in water to make a fine suspension (unlicensed use). Soluble prednisolone 5mg tablets may be justified in a limited range of clinical situations (e.g. in those with fine bore enteral feeding tubes). The potential saving in Lincolnshire if only 50% of existing prescriptions were changed to prednisolone plain tablets is over £120,000.

Broken down by CCG the savings opportunities are as follows:

	Potential annual saving if 50% of prednisolone 5mg soluble tablets switched to standard prednisolone 5mg tablets
Lincolnshire East CCG	£37,130
Lincolnshire West CCG	£36,120
South Lincolnshire CCG	£32,775
South West Lincolnshire CCG	£16,352
Lincolnshire	£122,377

PACEF Recommendation:

Prescribers are reminded of the exceptionally high price of prednisolone soluble tablets 5mg and advised to review all current prescriptions. Both prednisolone 1mg

and 5mg plain tablets are relatively small and do not present swallowing issues for most patients. Additionally, prednisolone 1mg and 5mg plain tablets can be dispersed in water to make a fine suspension (unlicensed use). Soluble prednisolone tablets may be justified in a limited range of clinical situations (e.g. in those with fine bore enteral feeding tubes). The potential saving in Lincolnshire if only 50% of existing prescriptions were changed to prednisolone plain tablets is over £120,000

Reference

Trent Medicines Information Service, *QIPP Detail Aid: Prednisolone – use plain, not soluble tablets* (January 2015)

QIPP OPPORTUNITIES: UPDATE ON LOWER COST BRANDS

RAPID DRUG ASSESSMENT: GLICLAZIDE 30MG AND 60MG MODIFIED RELEASE TABLETS (VAMJU) FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES MELLITUS

A new lower cost modified release gliclazide product offers a second line alternative to generic gliclazide 80mg tablets.

Vamju is a new lower cost branded formulation of modified release gliclazide available as 30mg and 60mg tablets. It is licensed for the treatment of type 2 diabetes mellitus. At present, gliclazide 80mg tablets are recommended as the first line sulfonylurea of choice on the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary*; no modified release formulations of gliclazide are currently listed on the *Formulary*.

British National Formulary advice states that: ‘gliclazide modified release 30mg may be considered to be approximately equivalent in therapeutic effect to standard formulation gliclazide 80mg’.

A cost comparison reveals the following;

	Dose	Cost (28 days)
Gliclazide 80mg tablets (generic)	One tablet daily	£1.14
Gliclazide 30mg modified release tablets (<i>Vamju</i>) (Amdipharm Mercury)	One tablet daily in the morning.	£1.64
Gliclazide 60mg modified release tablets (<i>Vamju</i>) (Amdipharm Mercury)	One tablet daily in the morning	£3.28
Gliclazide 30mg modified release tablets (<i>Diamicron MR</i>) (Servier)	One tablet daily in the morning.	£2.81
Gliclazide 60mg modified release tablets (<i>Laaglyda MR</i>) (Consilient Health)	One tablet daily in the morning	£4.77
Gliclazide 30mg modified release tablets (<i>Vitile XL</i>) (Actavis)	One tablet daily in the morning.	£2.81

PACEF Recommendation:

Gliclazide is the preferred sulfonylurea on the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary*. Generic gliclazide tablets 80mg are preferred first line. Gliclazide 30mg and 60mg modified release tablets (*Vamju*) are approved for use second line. Designation: GREEN. Where the patient is intolerant of gliclazide 80mg, gliclazide 30mg modified release tablet (*Vamju*) can be considered as an alternative. The lower acquisition cost can only be guaranteed if *Vamju* is prescribed by brand name. Gliclazide 30mg and 60mg modified release tablets (*Vamju*) are approved for inclusion the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary*.

RAPID COST COMPARISON: PREGABALIN CAPSULES (LECAENT AND REWISCA)

Two new branded pregabalin capsule formulations are evaluated; only *Rewisca* is approved for use.

In a recent issue of the *PACE Bulletin* (Volume 9; Number 3 (March 2015)) we published guidance for prescribers, dispensers and community pharmacists on the prescribing and dispensing of pregabalin for neuropathic pain. In that *Bulletin* we made reference to two new branded pregabalin capsule formulations that PACEF have now assessed. These products are pregabalin capsules (*Lecaent*) and pregabalin capsules (*Rewisca*). The products hold marketing authorisations as tabulated below; neither of the hold marketing authorisations for central or peripheral neuropathic pain; *Lyrica* is still patent protected for these indications.

Authorised indications

	Licensed indications
Pregabalin capsules 25mg, 50mg, 75mg, 100mg, 150mg, 200mg, 225mg, 300mg (<i>Lecaent</i>) (Actavis UK Ltd)	<i>Epilepsy</i> <i>Lecaent</i> is indicated as adjunctive therapy in adults with partial seizures with or without secondary generalisation. <i>Generalised Anxiety Disorder</i> <i>Lecaent</i> is indicated for the treatment of Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD) in adults.
Pregabalin capsules 25mg, 50mg, 75mg, 100mg, 150mg, 200mg, 225mg, 300mg (<i>Rewisca</i>) (Consilient Health Ltd)	<i>Epilepsy</i> <i>Rewisca</i> is indicated as adjunctive therapy in adults with partial seizures with or without secondary generalisation. <i>Generalised Anxiety Disorder</i> <i>Rewisca</i> is indicated for the treatment of Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD) in adults.

Cost Comparison

	Dose	Cost (28 Days)
Pregabalin 75mg capsules (<i>Lecaent</i>)	75mg twice daily	£64.39
Pregabalin 75mg capsules (<i>Lyrica</i>)	75mg twice daily	£64.40
Pregabalin 75mg capsules (<i>Rewisca</i>)	75mg twice daily	£48.30
Gabapentin 300mg capsules	300mg three times daily	£3.66
Pregabalin 50mg capsules (<i>Lecaent</i>)	50mg three times daily	£96.59
Pregabalin 50mg capsules (<i>Lyrica</i>)	50mg three times daily	£96.60
Pregabalin 50mg capsules (<i>Rewisca</i>)	50mg three times daily	£72.45
Gabapentin 300mg capsules	300mg three times daily	£3.66
Pregabalin 100mg capsules (<i>Lecaent</i>)	100mg three times daily	£96.59
Pregabalin 100mg capsules (<i>Lyrica</i>)	100mg three times daily	£96.60
Pregabalin 100mg capsules (<i>Rewisca</i>)	100mg three times daily	£72.45
Gabapentin 600mg tablets	600mg three times daily	£9.71
Pregabalin 150mg capsules (<i>Lecaent</i>)	150mg twice daily	£64.39
Pregabalin 150mg capsules (<i>Lyrica</i>)	150mg twice daily	£64.40
Pregabalin 150mg capsules (<i>Rewisca</i>)	150mg twice daily	£48.30
Gabapentin 600mg tablets	600mg three times daily	£9.71
Pregabalin 200mg capsules (<i>Lecaent</i>)	200mg three times daily	£96.59
Pregabalin 200mg capsules (<i>Lyrica</i>)	200mg three times daily	£96.60
Pregabalin 200mg capsules (<i>Rewisca</i>)	200mg three times daily	£72.45
Gabapentin 300mg capsules	THREE 300mg (900mg) capsules three times daily	£10.98
Pregabalin 300mg capsules (<i>Lecaent</i>)	300mg twice daily	£64.39

Pregabalin 300mg capsules (<i>Lyrice</i>)	300mg twice daily	£64.40
Pregabalin 300mg capsules (<i>Rewisca</i>)	300mg twice daily	£48.30
Gabapentin 300mg capsules	THREE 300mg (900mg) capsules three times daily	£10.98

PACEF Recommendations:

(1) When prescribing pregabalin for the treatment of anything other than central or peripheral neuropathic pain, pregabalin should be prescribed generically or as a lower cost brand (*Rewisca*).

(2) Prescribers should ensure that, as far as reasonably possible, branded *Lyrice* is prescribed by name for all patients requiring pregabalin for the patent protected indication of neuropathic pain (i.e. *Lyrice* 75mg capsules rather than pregabalin 75mg capsules).

(3) Community pharmacies and dispensing practices should ensure that, as far as reasonably possible, branded *Lyrice* is dispensed against all prescriptions for pregabalin for patients suffering from neuropathic pain. Prescribers are asked to be supportive of community pharmacy requests to change generic prescriptions to branded *Lyrice* for a patent protected indication.

(4) Practices should review all patients currently prescribed pregabalin for neuropathic pain to ensure that, wherever possible, all prescriptions for a patent protected indication specify the *Lyrice* brand.

(5) Pregabalin can continue to be prescribed generically for non-patent protected indications such as: (1) epilepsy; (2) generalised anxiety disorder (GAD) and: (3) pain that cannot be classified as central or peripheral neuropathic pain (unlicensed indication; see definitions below).

(6) *Rewisca* is a new branded formulation of pregabalin available from Consilient Health Ltd that is 25% lower cost than *Lyrice*. It is approved for prescribing through the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary* and designated GREEN. In order to achieve the cost saving the product must be prescribed by brand. It should only be prescribed for non-patent protected indications (see table of authorised indications above).

(7) *Lecaent* is a new branded formulation of pregabalin available from Actavis UK Ltd that is similarly priced to *Lyrice*. It is not approved for prescribing through the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary* and is designated RED-RED.

(8) In the absence of low cost generic pregabalin for neuropathic pain, generic gabapentin provides a potential low cost alternative. Gabapentin is approved for use on the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary* (designation: GREEN) and is licensed for peripheral neuropathic pain. While upward dose titration is more complex and dosage potentially more frequent, prescribers should consider gabapentin preferentially in new patients requiring treatment with a GABA analogue for neuropathic pain.

RAPID COST COMPARISON: FELODIPINE 5MG AND 10MG MODIFIED RELEASE TABLETS

Vascalpha is an exceptionally high cost brand of modified release felodipine tablets and should not be prescribed.

	Dose	Cost (28 days)
First line		
Amlodipine 5mg tablets (generic)	5mg once daily	£0.91
Amlodipine 10mg tablets (generic)	10mg once daily	£0.94
Lercanidipine 10mg tablets (generic)	10mg once daily	£1.54
Lercanidipine 20mg tablets (generic)	20mg once daily	£1.78

Second line		
Felodipine 2.5mg modified release tablets (generic)	2.5mg each morning	£6.31
Felodipine 5mg modified release tablets (generic)	5mg each morning	£4.21
Felodipine 10mg modified release tablets (generic)	10mg each morning	£5.66
Felodipine 2.5mg modified release tablets (<i>Cardioplén XL</i>) (Chiesi)	2.5mg each morning	£5.68
Felodipine 5mg modified release tablets (<i>Cardioplén XL</i>) (Chiesi)	5mg each morning	£3.87
Felodipine 10mg modified release tablets (<i>Cardioplén XL</i>) (Chiesi)	10mg each morning	£4.81
Felodipine 2.5mg modified release tablets (<i>Felotens XL</i>)	2.5mg each morning	£5.75
Felodipine 5mg modified release tablets (<i>Felotens XL</i>)	5mg each morning	£4.02
Felodipine 10mg modified release tablets (<i>Felotens XL</i>)	10mg each morning	£5.10
Felodipine 2.5mg modified release tablets (<i>Neofel XL</i>)	2.5mg each morning	£6.31
Felodipine 5mg modified release tablets (<i>Neofel XL</i>)	5mg each morning	£4.21
Felodipine 10mg modified release tablets (<i>Neofel XL</i>)	10mg each morning	£5.66
Felodipine 2.5mg modified release tablets (<i>Plendil</i>) (AstraZeneca)	2.5mg each morning	£6.31
Felodipine 5mg modified release tablets (<i>Plendil</i>) (AstraZeneca)	5mg each morning	£4.21
Felodipine 10mg modified release tablets (<i>Plendil</i>) (AstraZeneca)	10mg each morning	£5.66
Felodipine 5mg modified release tablets (<i>Vascalpha</i>) (Actavis)	5mg each morning	£7.17
Felodipine 10mg modified release tablets (<i>Vascalpha</i>) (Actavis)	10mg each morning	£9.63

PACEF Recommendation:

Prescribers are reminded that generic amlodipine and generic lercanidipine are the first line once daily dihydropyridine calcium channel blockers of choice on the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary* and are designated GREEN. Felodipine 2.5mg, 5mg and 10mg modified release tablets are available on *Formulary* as a second line alternative to those intolerant to first line options; designation GREEN. Felodipine should either be prescribed generically or as a lower cost brand such as *Cardioplén XL* or *Felotens XL*. Felodipine 5mg and 10mg modified release tablets (*Vascalpha*) are prohibitively expensive compared to generic or lower cost brand prescribing of felodipine and are designated RED-RED. They are not approved for inclusion in the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary*. Support is available from the Prescribing and Medicines Optimisation Service for the few remaining practices that have yet to fully implement a therapeutic switch of appropriate patients from felodipine to amlodipine.

UPDATED COST COMPARISON: QUETIAPINE SUSTAINED RELEASE TABLETS (MINTRELEQ XL)

Mintreleq XL, another new low cost brand of modified release quetiapine, is approved for use.

A further new modified release quetiapine formulation has been launched in the UK, known as *Mintreleq XL*. In common with other modified release quetiapine preparations reviewed in a previous issue of the *Bulletin* (see Vol 9 No 2 (February 2015)), it is bioequivalent with *Seroquel XL* and priced at 50% lower than the originator brand. This means that it fits PACEF criteria for a lower cost quetiapine MR formulation in common with *Ebesque XL* (DB Ashbourne), *Biquelle XL* (Aspire Pharma Ltd) and *Zaluron XL* (Fontus Health Ltd).

Current PACEF advice is to prescribe quetiapine as a standard release generic. Practices have been encouraged and supported to implement therapeutic switches from modified release quetiapine to the equivalent dose standard release generic. However, while some practices have been willing to undertake this switch, others have expressed unease about implementation without endorsement from the initiating specialist. In many cases, patients stabilised on long-term quetiapine have been discharged from specialist support and it has been difficult to find an initiating psychiatrist to support such a switch. After reviewing a range of new lower cost MR products, PACEF are in support of therapeutic switching from *Seroquel XL* to one of the approved lower cost MR brands as an alternative to the switch to standard release generic quetiapine. The QIPP savings will not be as great, but such a switch would reduce prescribing costs by 50%.

Following this cost comparison, four products now emerge as lower cost: *Ebesque XL*, *Biquelle XL*, *Mintreleq XL* and *Zaluron XL*; of these, *Biquelle XL*, *Mintreleq XL* and *Zaluron XL* are the lowest cost.

Potential Cost Saving: Modified Release Quetiapine to Standard Release Quetiapine

Therapeutic switching from modified release quetiapine to generic standard release quetiapine has the potential to generate significant savings across the Lincolnshire CCGs:

CCG	Annual 100% saving
Lincolnshire East CCG	£148,278
Lincolnshire West CCG	£353,040
South Lincolnshire CCG	£48,006
South West Lincolnshire CCG	£40,194
Lincolnshire	£589,518

Potential Cost Saving: Modified Release Quetiapine to Quetiapine fumarate sustained release tablets (*Ebesque XL*)

Where this is problematic or impractical, therapeutic switching from a higher cost modified release quetiapine formulation (e.g. *Seroquel XL*) to a lower cost preferred MR brand has the potential to generate lower, but still significant savings:

CCG	Annual 100% saving
Lincolnshire East CCG	£78,041
Lincolnshire West CCG	£185,811
South Lincolnshire CCG	£25,266
South West Lincolnshire CCG	£21,155
Lincolnshire	£310,273

These figures assume that patients taking *Seroquel XL* are switched to *Ebesque XL*; savings would be even greater if one of the three even lower cost products (*Biquelle XL*, *Mintreleq XL* or *Zaluron XL*) were used.

Updated PACEF Recommendation

Low cost generic standard release quetiapine tablets remain the preferred first line option in most patients where quetiapine is clinically indicated. However, lower cost modified release brands of quetiapine are now available and should be preferred in patients requiring a modified release product. The lower cost brands approved by PACEF and included in the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary* are *Ebesque XL*, *Biquelle XL*, *Mintreleq XL* and *Zaluron XL*; of these, *Biquelle XL*, *Mintreleq XL* and *Zaluron XL* are the lowest cost. All of these products are designated GREEN in all strengths. Practices currently prescribing higher cost modified release quetiapine preparations are urged to review their position with a view to switching to their preferred lower cost

brand. Lower cost MR quetiapine should be prescribed by brand name to ensure a lower NHS reimbursement price is paid. Practices are advised not to issue open generic prescriptions for quetiapine MR or to issue branded prescriptions for higher cost products such as *Seroquel XL*, *Seotiapim XL*, *Sondate XL*, and *Tenprolide XL*. All of these products are designated RED-RED and none are included on the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary*.

NICE TECHNOLOGY APPRAISAL 335: RIVAROXABAN FOR PREVENTING ADVERSE OUTCOMES AFTER ACUTE MANAGEMENT OF ACUTE CORONARY SYNDROME (MARCH 2015)

Rivaroxaban is recommended as an option within its marketing authorisation, in combination with aspirin plus clopidogrel or aspirin alone, for preventing atherothrombotic events in people who have had an acute coronary syndrome with elevated cardiac biomarkers.

Clinicians should carefully assess the risk of bleeding before treatment is started. The decision to start treatment should be made after an informed discussion between the clinician and the patient.

A decision on continuation of treatment should be taken no later than 12 months after starting treatment. Clinicians should regularly reassess the relative benefits and risks of continuing treatment with rivaroxaban and discuss them with the patient.

PACEF Recommendation:

Rivaroxaban (*Xarelto*) is already included on the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary* for a number of indications. Rivaroxaban 2.5mg tablets are designated GREEN for use in combination with aspirin plus clopidogrel or aspirin alone, for preventing atherothrombotic events in people who have had an ACS with elevated cardiac biomarkers.

NICE TECHNOLOGY APPRAISAL 343: OBINUTUZUMAB IN COMBINATION WITH CHLORAMBUCIL FOR UNTREATED CHRONIC LYMPHOCYTIC LEUKAEMIA (JUNE 2015)

Obinutuzumab, in combination with chlorambucil, is recommended as an option for adults with untreated chronic lymphocytic leukaemia who have comorbidities that make full-dose fludarabine-based unsuitable for them, but only if bendamustine-based therapy is not suitable.

PACEF Recommendation:

Obinutuzumab infusion (*Gazyvaro*) is approved for inclusion on the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary* for use in combination with chlorambucil for the treatment of adult patients with previously untreated chronic lymphocytic leukaemia and with co-morbidities making them unsuitable for full dose fludarabine based therapy. Designation: RED.

NICE TECHNOLOGY APPRAISAL 344: OFATUMUMAB IN COMBINATION WITH CHLORAMBUCIL OR BENDAMUSTINE FOR UNTREATED CHRONIC LYMPHOCYTIC LEUKAEMIA (JUNE 2015)

Ofatumumab in combination with chlorambucil is recommended as an option for untreated chronic lymphocytic leukaemia only if the person is ineligible for fludarabine-based therapy and bendamustine is not suitable.

PACEF Recommendation:

Ofatumumab infusion (*Arzerra*) is approved for inclusion in the *Lincolnshire Joint Formulary* for use in combination with chlorambucil for the treatment of chronic lymphocytic leukaemia for patients who have not received prior therapy and who are not eligible for fludarabine based therapy. Designation: RED.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to: Cathy Johnson, Interface Lead Pharmacist, Robyn Thompson, Senior Pharmacist, United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust, Rachelle Hall, Medicines Manager, Gosberton Medical Centre and Sue Carr, Trent Medicines Information Service for their help during the compilation of this *Bulletin*.

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July 2015