Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) Website

http://www.sps.nhs.uk

How to search for information on medicines

Overview

The Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) – Medicines Use and Safety (MUS), Procurement, Quality Assurance (QA), Technical Services and UKMi has launched a new website. Its aim is to be “The first stop for professional medicines advice”.

This new website has purposed-designed functionality and brings together the content of a number of historical SPS websites onto one platform. Users continue to have open access to the majority of the site and the content they are familiar with including the national Patient Group Direction (PGD) website guidance. Procurement training information and QA’s “yellow cover documents” on a variety of technical matters such as microbiological monitoring and over labeling are readily available. Information from most UKMI resources, including Medicines Q and As, fridge, lactation, compliance aid and patent expiry information, together with horizon scanning and new medicines information have moved onto the new website. Visitors to all the relevant legacy sites will be redirected to the new SPS website.

The site is structured into Medicines, Services, Networks and About SPS.

The simple search function (Search all of SPS) will display relevant items from all of the SPS teams on one page which can then be viewed as presented, refined (by filtering) or explored in depth to answer a query. Alternatively individual sections, such as “Medicines” can be searched.
Things to note

Classification
There is no BNF classification; all individual drugs are coded with the relevant dm&d code where available. Dm+d coding ensures the SPS website is fully compliant with current and anticipated NHS information standards and can be interfaced with other systems using Dm+d and SNOMED coding.

It is possible to search by therapeutic ‘specialty’, using the same categories as those used by NHS Evidence. You can apply this filter by choosing the most appropriate term to apply.

How the site searches
When you start typing in the search box, the system recognises part of what you’re typing and will display relevant looking matches from the content. This will include the possible dm&d options and any term with that string of letter. For example, if you start typing “ome”, the system will show all the drugs containing “ome”- omeprazole, beclometasone, esomeprazole etc.

It is also possible to search ‘free text’ if a dm&d match isn’t available.

Browsers
The site works best on modern browsers. You may not be able to use some of the features if using older browsers, for example IE8 or earlier.
What has happened to the UKMi database content?

All the information UKMi databases have been transferred to the new site with all the information in one place under the individual monograph heading. The information is now organised around the medicine as opposed to the old database ‘themes’.

**Medicines Compliance Aids**

So, for example if you were looking for information on a specific product about its suitability for inclusion in a Medicines Compliance Aid you would follow these steps:

1. Enter the name of the medicines you are looking for in the search box at the top of the page.

2. Click on the specific medicine that is retrieved on the list that is displayed.

![Search results for: omeprazole](image)
3. Scroll down the page to the advice on MCA stability for products containing that medicine.

**Fridge Stability Information**

If you were looking for stability information on a specific product that is normally stored in the fridge (e.g. chloramphenicol eye drops) but has been inadvertently exposed to a temperature excursion you would carry out the following:

Repeat steps 1 and 2 as described above and scroll down the page to ‘Refrigerated Storage’ information in the relevant monograph.

**Note:** There may be more than one brand of the same drug listed under the refrigerated storage section. Therefore users must ensure that information for the correct brand is used.
**Lactation**

To find out if omeprazole is compatible for use in breast feeding repeat steps 1 and 2 and scroll down to lactation safety information in the relevant monograph.

Within this section there are links to further information, such as the therapeutic group summary, which provides an overview on the use in lactation of that particular therapeutic group of medicines, and relevant Medicines Q & A’s.

Clicking on the ‘therapeutic group summary’ link will also allow you to link through to other drugs in that therapeutic class to see the advice for similar agents. Click on any of the grey drug names will take you back through a search page; select the drug again to go to the monograph for that agent.

**Safety in Lactation: Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs)**

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Esomeprazole, Lansoprazole, Omeprazole, Pantoprazole, Rabeprazole

Omeprazole and pantoprazole are the PPIs of choice, even though the evidence is limited. There is currently no evidence to support the use of other PPIs, even though they are probably also safe to use.

**New Medicines/ patents**

For information about new products that you would have previously found in New Drugs Online take the following steps:

1. If you are not already logged in, do so and you will be able to see certain fields that are restricted to NHS users only. To register for the first time go to the link in the top right of the screen.

2. If you know the name of the drug type that into the search box e.g. infliximab. You will see a list of all articles and entries that have been tagged with ‘infliximab’.
3. Click on the grey ‘medicines’ heading to display the page for infliximab and scroll down to ‘New Medicines’. Here you will find all the entries that were in NDO including licence extensions, new formulations and biosimilars. Medicines in Phase III development have ‘skinny’ entries without too much detail. Once a product is filed with the regulatory authorities then more information will be added to the website.

4. You can only search for new products by individual drug name at the moment. If you are familiar with producing reports from NDO by company or by year, for example, and need this functionality for your work, please submit your request via the ‘Ask a Question’ button, contact your nearest regional MI centre or contact Helen.davis@lrippu.nhs.uk who will be able to help.

The ‘new medicines’ entry and relevant tag will be removed from the monograph two years after launch. The monograph will then only contain post launch information such as that relating to pharmaceutical stability, patent expiry, lactation information etc.

Some products are listed under ‘new medicines’ as being ‘discontinued’. They have been tracked as part of horizon scanning activities but will not be available on the UK market. These entries will also remain on the site for two years post discontinuation after which the whole monograph will be deleted.

**Patents**
Patent information can be found in the same way as described above. Scroll down right to the bottom of the page to the section titled ‘Patent Expiry Information’. Again you must be logged in to be able to view this information.
Other ways of searching

If you wanted to find all drugs for which the site has information on, for example, stability in compliance aids, you can click on “Medicines articles” on the home page or at https://www.sps.nhs.uk/category/medicine/.

The relevant filter on the right-hand side can then be used.

You can further filter the information by searching for the individual medicine.
If you want to bring up a list of all entries tagged ‘New medicine’ then go to the home page and click on ‘New Medicines’

The following links will also take you directly to the page for the relevant section on all drugs for which the site has information:

**Medicines Compliance aids**
https://www.sps.nhs.uk/?s=&cat%5B%5D=266&cat%5B%5D=3253

**Lactation**
https://www.sps.nhs.uk/?s=&cat%5B%5D=3008

**Fridge excursions**
https://www.sps.nhs.uk/?s=&cat%5B%5D=3252

**Patent expiries**
https://www.sps.nhs.uk/?s=&cat%5B1%5D=3242

**New Medicines**
https://www.sps.nhs.uk/category/new-medicines/
**Remember**

The easiest way to find what you’re after is to search the site by generic drug name and then to use the filters on the right to further refine the search to find what you’re after.

**What if I can’t find what I am looking for?**

Should users not find what they are looking for there is an “Ask a Question” function on the right hand side of every page.

Technical and content queries can be sent to b.rehman@nhs.net or tim.root@chelwest.nhs.uk