

# SPS Spotlight Monthly Digest

## March 2024

Resources to support healthcare professionals working in all areas of the health system

**\* Please share with the wider team \***

The first stop for professional medicines advice

March 2024

# ADVICE & GUIDANCE

**The licence and supporting evidence for tocilizumab biosimilar:** One licensed tocilizumab biosimilar is available: Tyenne. Learn about the licensed indications, supporting evidence and key differences.

**Preparing to use tocilizumab biosimilar:** Introducing biosimilar tocilizumab needs planning. Work with the multidisciplinary team to ensure familiarity with the area and develop an implementation plan.

**Good governance when implementing tocilizumab biosimilar:** Governance should consider processes for approval, procurement and supply, prescribing and administration, monitoring, and pharmacovigilance.

# ADVICE & GUIDANCE

**The licence and supporting evidence for eculizumab biosimilar:** Two licensed eculizumab biosimilars are available: Bekemv and Epysqli. Learn about the licensed indications, supporting evidence and key differences.

**Preparing to use eculizumab biosimilar:** Introducing biosimilar eculizumab needs planning. Work with the multidisciplinary team to ensure familiarity with the area and develop an implementation plan.

**Good governance when implementing eculizumab biosimilar:** Governance should consider processes for approval, procurement and supply, prescribing and administration, monitoring, and pharmacovigilance.

# ADVICE & GUIDANCE

**Ensuring time critical use of rasburicase:** Timely use of rasburicase for treatment of Tumour Lysis Syndrome is essential. Mitigation strategies can minimise harm associated with delayed therapy.

## **Occupational health services (OHS) and medicines**

**mechanisms:** Various legal mechanisms can be used to supply and/or administer medicines within OHS. We explain some practical applications within this series.

**Delegation of roles under a PGD:** Delegation of any PGD function is not permitted. However there are specific tasks that individuals other than the professional working under a PGD can fulfil.

**Understanding contamination control in pharmacy aseptic services:** A co-ordinated approach to preventing microbial contamination ensures that aseptically prepared medicines are safe for patients.

**Process risk assessments for a Contamination Control Strategy:** Performing a Process Risk Assessment (PRA) to inform contamination control strategy for manufacturing processes within NHS units.

# ADVICE & GUIDANCE

**Treating heartburn and dyspepsia during breastfeeding:** Antacids, alginates, H2-receptor antagonists or proton pump inhibitors can be used during breastfeeding. Recommendations are for full term and healthy infants.

**Using gastrointestinal antispasmodics during breastfeeding:** Hyoscine butylbromide, propantheline or peppermint oil are preferred choices during breastfeeding. Recommendations apply to full term and healthy infants.

**Treating insomnia during breastfeeding:** Zopiclone and zolpidem are preferred for the short-term management of insomnia during breastfeeding. Recommendations apply to full term and healthy infants.

**Treating rectal and anal disorders during breastfeeding:** Rectal and anal topical preparations for haemorrhoids and anal fissures are compatible with breastfeeding. Recommendations apply to full term, healthy infants.

**Medication Safety Update: February 2024:** A resource collating the latest medication safety communications and publications to inform, support and inspire medication safety improvements.

# WEBINARS & EVENTS

## **Next events:**

### **Temperature controlled storage of medicines**

Thursday 18 April 2024 13:00-14:00 [Register here](#)

### **Primary care discussions: HRT use in clinical practice**

Wednesday 24 April 2024 13:00 - 14:00 [Register here](#)

### **What's new in PGDs and medicines mechanisms: an update**

Wednesday 1 May 2024 13:00 - 14:00 [Register here](#)

## **Past events:**

[Listen back](#) to our past events.

# PLANNING

[New Medicines News](#) - Highlights recent new product launches and regulatory changes.

[New Product Evaluations](#) - Lists new product evaluations freely available to NHS staff.

[Medicines Supply Tool](#) - Information provided by DHSC and NHSE Medicines Supply Teams for medication shortages (you must be registered and signed into our website to access this resource).

# SUPPLY ISSUES MANAGED BY RPPS

**Jext 300mcg autoinjector:** This is in short supply, and an MSN has been issued. There is sufficient stock of Epipen to cover.

**GLP-1 inhibitors:** An updated MSN has been issued with details on availability of each product.

**Salbutamol nebulas:** These continue to be in short supply. MSN has been issued. Supply issues have improved for the 5mg, but imports are still required to support the 2.5mg. Please be aware that unlicensed imports of salbutamol 2.5mg nebulas from Mawdsleys sourced from the USA are labelled as Albuterol which is the US name for salbutamol. It is also 2.5mg in 3ml rather than 2.5ml.

**Cisplatin:** There are issues with supply, and MSN has been shared. Trusts will need to order unlicensed imports.

**Creon 25000 unit capsules:** There is a supply issue with this and an MSN has been issued. Trusts should use the 10,000 unit capsules instead.

*Exend+: Trusts now have access and training has been provided. RPPSs are supporting trusts to understand the benefits of the system and populate their data with off contract reasons. This will allow trusts and regions to identify where and how improvements can be made to contract compliance and delivery of better value medicines.*



# SUPPLY ISSUES MANAGED BY RPPS

**Basiliximab:** Supply will be constrained for a period of time. This is being managed by DHSC and the SPS procurement teams. Where possible, please maximise the use of alemtuzumab, to conserve stock for trusts for whom basiliximab is the only option. Orders are being managed by the SPS procurement team, so please contact them for any queries.

**Albumin:** There are supply constraints of both strengths of albumin. Trusts are on monthly allocations, so please review where this is used and use alternatives if possible.

**IV fluids:** The supply issues with IV fluids are continuing. MPSC are meeting regularly with suppliers to manage the situation. Please speak to your regional procurement specialists if you have any questions

**Alteplase:** Allocations for April will be sent out to Trusts shortly. National guidance for the use of alteplase in stroke has changed, however, the supply position remains constrained and cannot support any further increase in use.

**ADHD medicines:** Further support and information can be found via: [Prescribing available medicines to treat ADHD.](#)

## **Access to the SPS Medicines Advice Service**

A single, national telephone number and email for the SPS Medicines Advice Service for primary care-based healthcare professionals, has now been launched.

**Email:** [askspns.nhs@sps.direct](mailto:askspns.nhs@sps.direct)

**Phone:** 0300 770 8564

## **KEEP UP TO DATE**

**Bookmark our website** <https://www.sps.nhs.uk>

**Register** [here](#) on our website and 'opt in' to receive the **weekly SPS bulletin**.

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You can now also follow us on **LinkedIn** - search NHS Specialist Pharmacy Service or click the link and make sure you connect

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/specialist-pharmacy-service/>

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