

BLMK Area Prescribing Committee (APC) Newsletter December 2021, Number 02

Summary of Key Recommendations – 1st December 2021 APC meeting

(For full details of Joint Formulary additions / amendments – see separate
Formulary Newsletter



The following organisations contribute to and participate in the BLMK APC – Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group; Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust; Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust; Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust; East London NHS Foundation Trust; Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Welcome to the December 2021 BLMK Area Prescribing Committee (APC) newsletter

As a result of the CCG merger, the previous Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Prescribing Committee (JPC) and Milton Keynes Prescribing Advisory Committee (MKPAG) have been replaced with a BLMK wide Area Prescribing Committee (BLMK APC). The contents of this newsletter reflect the output from the second (1st December 2021) APC meeting.

BLMK Medicines Management Team Website Update :-

Following the CCG merger, from Sept 2021, all approved BLMK APC documents will be uploaded to this website. All current approved JPC/MKPAG documents will also remain on the website as before.

Medicines Management Team website:- <https://medicines.blmkccg.nhs.uk/>

Searching the website:

All documents referred to within the Newsletter (where appropriate) will be available shortly on the website.

The website has an easy to use search function which should make it easy to find the information you are looking for. If you have trouble searching the website or if you have any comments / suggestions, please do let us know - contact either Samantha.scholes@nhs.net (Website Manager) or Sandra.McGroarty@nhs.net (Website Pharmacist Clinical Lead)

TREATMENT / PRESCRIBING GUIDELINES

Strategies to support reduced inhaler carbon emissions

NEW
GUIDANCE

The [NHS Long Term Plan](#) for England 2019 has committed the NHS to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from inhalers, with a target to reduce the carbon impacts of inhalers by 50% by 2030. A range of strategies can support a reduction in the inhaler carbon footprint including optimising prescribing, switching to lower carbon footprint alternatives where clinically appropriate, and reducing inhaler waste. Developing an inhaler carbon footprint reduction strategy should be a phased approach and considered on a case-by-case basis, where clinically appropriate to help prevent any stock shortages and adverse outcomes for patients, pharmacies, or healthcare professionals. The committee ratified guidance for clinicians and a background briefing paper to support local adoption of the NHS sustainability agenda.

Antimicrobial prescribing guidelines for primary care

NEW BLMK
GUIDELINE

Update and alignment

Alignment of Bedfordshire & Luton, and Milton Keynes antimicrobial prescribing guidelines has been undertaken to produce a BLMK Guideline taking into consideration the Public Health England (PHE) and NICE guidance. The guidelines were ratified by the APC.

Where differences existed (course length or antibiotic choice) the PHE/NICE position has been followed except for urinary tract infections due to local resistance patterns relating to trimethoprim. This deviation from national guidelines had the approval of our Consultant microbiologists.

NICE guidelines for acne (NG 198) and *Clostridioides difficile* (NG 199) were published in the summer of 2021 and these updates have been incorporated into the aligned document.

For *Clostridioides difficile*, vancomycin (oral) is now recommended as a first line choice in all cases. Metronidazole is no longer recommended.

With respect to the acne guidance – a 12 week course of treatment is now recommended instead of the original 6 week recommended course. The guidelines have been updated to reflect this.

[A number of changes to both Joint Medicine Formularies will be required as a result of the update to the guidelines. When this review is complete, the Formulary Newsletter will be updated to advise on the changes](#)

Interim BLMK Primary Care Guidelines for the management of chronic non- cancer pain in adults

NEW
BLMK INTERIM
GUIDELINES

In April 2021, NICE issued new Chronic Pain Guidelines – [Chronic pain \(primary and secondary\) in over 16s: assessment of all chronic pain and management of chronic primary pain](#) (NICE guidance [NG193] Published: 07 April 2021), which will take time to implement as additional planned and commissioned services will be required. This work is currently in progress across BLMK.

As a result of the NICE Guideline publication, the current Pain Guidelines (those agreed by the Milton Keynes Prescribing Advisory Group and those agreed by the Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Prescribing Committee) needed to be revised. This is a big undertaking which will need to be done in full alongside the commissioning of services. To withdraw the guidelines completely while the NICE implementation work is going would leave a substantial gap in the provision of information to GPs who are prescribing for patients. The APC therefore discussed and approved **interim guidelines**.

[A number of changes to both Joint Medicine Formularies will be required as a result of the update to the guidelines. When this review is complete, the Formulary Newsletter will be updated to advise on the changes.](#)

Bariatric Surgery – Vitamins and minerals

A guidance sheet has been produced for BLMK clinicians regarding vitamin and mineral preparations needed post bariatric surgery and whether they are for prescribing or OTC purchase. This was supported by the APC.

NEW
GUIDANCE

Oxygen for cluster headaches

There has been a minor update to the bulletin which has now been approved for use across BLMK.

Minor UPDATE to Bulletin
and
Extended across BLMK ICS

SECONDARY CARE PRESCRIBING / COMMISSIONING ISSUES

BLMK Treatment Pathway for Rheumatoid Arthritis Update

The main Rheumatoid Arthritis Algorithm (algorithm A) has been updated to reflect the publication of NICE TA 744 (regarding the use of Upadacitinib as a treatment option for moderate disease).

The rest of the pathway has been updated to reflect the fact that we currently do not support switching between JAK inhibitors. Therefore, if a JAK inhibitor is used for moderate disease, it can't be selected for use further down the pathway.

Additional information regarding a recent supply disruption alert (SDA) for tocilizumab also been added to has the front page. This relates to the need to prioritise the supplies of tocilizumab s/c for 19 indications non covid due to increased global demand in order to ensure adequate supplies are needed. available when The updated pathway was approved by the APC.

PATHWAY
UPDATED

SHARED CARE GUIDELINES

The following shared care guideline was approved by the APC:-

UPDATED

- Transgender Shared Care Guidelines, September 2021 update.

It was noted that the guidelines were for use in adults only. Shared care for children and adolescents supported within BLMK.

FORMULARY - IMPORTANT

See separate Formulary Newsletter to access the Medicines and Wound Care Formularies Updates

Dapagliflozin is no longer licensed for treatment of Type 1 diabetes. See [link](#) for more information & Formulary entries (now non-Formulary for this indication)

NICE TECHNOLOGY APPRAISAL GUIDANCE and GUIDELINES ISSUED / UPDATED

The following NICE Technology Appraisal Guidance (CCG Commissioned) have been published during the period 16th September – 17th November 2021 inclusive :-

Inclisiran for treating primary hypercholesterolaemia or mixed dyslipidaemia, Technology appraisal guidance [TA733] Published: 06 October 2021, <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta733>

Upadacitinib for treating moderate rheumatoid arthritis, Technology appraisal guidance [TA744]Published: 10 November 2021, <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta744>

[Click here](#) to access all technology appraisal guidelines - CCG and NHSE Commissioned (16thSeptember - 17th November 2021 inclusive)

NICE Guidelines :-

NICE have published several NICE Guidelines since September 2021 - [click here](#) to access these guidelines.

NICE COVID-19 Rapid Reviews/Information

The Committee noted that NICE have continued to issue/update a series of covid 19 rapid reviews/information:– this information can be accessed from the NICE website [click here](#)

MEDICINES SAFETY DRUG UPDATES (DSU) AND PATIENT SAFETY ALERTS

The APC received a Primary Care Medicines Safety Update and an update from the BLMK ICS Medicines Safety Group (MSG).

The Primary Care Medicines Safety Update focussed on the primary care response to the MHRA Drug Safety Updates ([September](#) and [October](#)). In particular:-

Topical corticosteroids: information on the risk of topical steroid withdrawal reactions

Action(s) taken: Communication via BLMK Primary Care Newsletter which goes to all practices within BLMK (medicines safety team)

Tofacitinib (Xeljanz ▼): new measures to minimise risk of major adverse cardiovascular events and malignancies

Actions taken: Review of local pathways, updating of proformas and consultation with Trust clinicians (commissioning team)

Chloral hydrate, chloral betaine (Welldorm): restriction of paediatric indication

Action(s) taken: Review of primary care use over BLMK, practices with cohort targeted, project management team (paediatric neurology pharmacist) has informed specialist teams. Discussed at BLMK medicines safety group to ensure ICS provider engagement. Included in BLMK primary care newsletter. Formulary Updated.

Fire risk from use of emollient creams

There have been a few local and national incidents highlighted by the Fire Service in relation to the use of emollient creams within the community setting – domiciliary care and care homes. Initial workshop held with CCG safeguarding, CCG medicines optimisation and the fire service from Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire. To raise awareness of MHRA resources, fire service to develop a referral pathway and key stakeholders – provider (community and acute) and local authorities to be engaged as workstream progresses.

<https://www.gov.uk/drug-safety-update/emollients-and-risk-of-severe-and-fatal-burns-new-resources-available>

Other area(s) of progress

- BLMK CCG medicines safety and formulary pharmacist joined the organisation on 2nd November 2021
- BLMK CCG MSO dedicated email address set up and live – to receive serious incidents, quarterly quality reports from providers.
- Care home medicines optimisation and quality visits in progress – referral pathway approved at BLMK prescribing committee and circulated to key stakeholders

The BLMK ICS Medicines safety group (MSG) was held on 19th October 2021. The key areas of focus were:

MedSafetyWeek November 2021: support the safety of vaccines

The sixth annual MHRA #MedSafetyWeek social media campaign took place on 1st to 7th November 2021. This year's theme was on the importance of reporting suspected adverse reactions to vaccines. The MHRA page provided a number of resources. Most can be accessed here: [Yellow Card Scheme - MHRA](#)

Examples of #medSafetyWeek from BLMK ICS MSG: -

- MKUH shared messages internally in the Trust via intranet and newsletter, also arranged for a stand for the Medicines Safety team to answer any questions. Messages were sent via Twitter and Facebook.
- BHFT sent out a message within the weekly trust-wide comms newsletter at the start of #MedSafetyWeek and embedded all the links to MHRA resources and yellow card.
- The BLMK ICS MSG are launching a new medicines safety section via BLMK CCG website and a new quarterly BLMK ICS medicines safety newsletter to share learning from medication incidents and raise awareness on local and national safety initiatives to improve medicines safety.

Parkinson's medication – improving access to specialist advice

The MSG have explored the provision of Parkinson's specialist nurses across the ICS and are currently compiling a list of contacts and revisiting current commissioned specifications to ensure that there is access to specialist advice in relation to medication, throughout the patient journey (from admission to hospital, inpatient and at discharge) in addition to medicines information and related resources. It was noted that self-administration of medicines policy implementation could also be a key influential factor in optimising timely administration of medicines for patients with Parkinson's.

In addition to the information above, the committee noted that the [November 2021 Drug Safety Update](#) had been published.

ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE UPDATE

The following information was brought to the committee for noting:

- East of England Regional Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) Lead in post – Dr Naomi Fleming
- BLMK SRO for Antimicrobial Stewardship – Dr Sureena Goutam
- HCAI / AMR steering group met in October 2021
- Emerging themes:
 - AMS Workforce
 - Align guidelines the use of digital technology (HBLICT app)
 - Share staff training
 - Benchmarking of data (available through regional team)
 - Diagnostic stewardship

ADDITIONAL PAPERS/ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE

New treatments for COVID-19

An information paper on new treatments for Covid 19 came to the APC for noting and included information on:-

- Neutralising monoclonal antibodies (nMABs) - Casirivimab and imdevimab (Ronapreve®)
- Antivirals - Molnupiravir (Lagevrio®)

Blood glucose and steroid therapy in palliative care patients – ELFT

The paper was approved by ELFT Medicines Management Committee on Wednesday 10th November subject to the information being added to an ELFT approved template. The paper came to the APC for information only.

BLMK APC MEETING DATES – 2021/22

Wednesday 2nd March 2022
 Wednesday 4th May 2022
 Wednesday 29th June 2022
 Wednesday 28th September 2022
 Wednesday 7th December 2022

OTHER NEWS

Use of Scriptswitch/Optimise Rx

To further enhance the communication of BLMK APC advice to GPs, the BLMK CCG medicine management team **are actively reviewing the messages on NetFormulary, Scriptswitch and Optimise Rx** to highlight when BLMK APC guidance is available and including a hyperlink to the BLMK Medicines Management website. Please advise us if you notice any issues.

Contact Us:- anne.graeff@nhs.net and sandra.mcgroarty@nhs.net