

Prescribing Hints & Tips

September 2025

DAPAGLIFLOZIN BECOMES FIRST LINE SGLT2 INHIBITOR AS GENERICS ARE NOW AVAILABLE

Generic formulations of **dapagliflozin** - the originator brand name is *Forxiga*® - are now available in the UK following the expiry of AstraZeneca's patent. This change offers significant opportunities for prescribing efficiencies across the system.

Prescribing Recommendations:

- **Prescribe generically (new and existing patients).** Generic dapagliflozin is therapeutically equivalent to the branded product and is suitable for use in all licensed indications.
- **Preferred option for new initiations:** Dapagliflozin is now recommended locally as the preferred SGLT2 inhibitor for new patients, where clinically appropriate.

DUROGESIC® DTRANS® (FENTANYL) TRANSDERMAL PATCHES DISCONTINUED

Please be aware that all strengths of Durogesic® DTrans® (fentanyl) transdermal patches have been discontinued. Do not initiate any new patients on Durogesic DTrans patches. Clinicians should review existing patients and consider prescribing an alternative brand of fentanyl **matrix** patch that is available. Our locally preferred brand of fentanyl patch is Opiodur® and this is a matrix patch.

HALOPERIDOL 500 MICROGRAM TABLETS – PLEASE REVIEW

Haloperidol 500 microgram tablets are now categorised as GREY non-formulary.

This change has been made as they are extremely expensive in comparison to other strengths (approx. £300 for 28).

An information sheet has been produced to support review, including consideration of more cost-effective alternatives such as oral solution.

REMINDER – RESPIRATORY RESCUE PACKS

In a recent local incident, a patient with COPD had 25 prescriptions for a prednisolone rescue pack issued over a 12 month period. This has been reviewed by the community pharmacy team and GP practice, and processes have now been updated.

Reminders for GP practices:

- Have a clear, documented process for the supply, monitoring, and review of exacerbation rescue medication.
- Reviews should occur regularly, and at least during annual review.
- If the practice hasn't been informed that the last course was taken, any new requests for a supply should prompt a review.

- Ask for a sputum sample from patients with frequent exacerbations or repeated prescription requests.
- Rescue packs should not be on repeat prescription unless there's a robust policy in place to ensure they are not issued without review.
- Consider bone health for all patients, especially those who've had 3 or more steroid courses in a year.

Please see the local guidance for prescribers on COPD rescue packs here [copd emergency-supply-medicines-prescribing-information.pdf \(nottsapc.nhs.uk\)](https://nottsapc.nhs.uk/emergency-supply-medicines-prescribing-information.pdf)

THERE IS STILL TIME TO SIGN UP TO THE ICB FUNDED EFFICIENCY SCHEMES

There are currently two funded voluntary prescribing schemes that GP practices can sign up for (see Teamnet links for detail and instructions on how to sign up)

- **DOAC (wave 2) scheme, ends 31 Oct 2025** (£80 per switch) – <https://teamnet.clarity.co.uk/Library/ViewItem/f1b9bf2a-e62c-49b9-ac45-b27200dd2ee0>
- **Cost-Effective switch scheme, ends 30 Nov 2025** (up to 20p per Carr-Hill weighted patient on list) – <https://teamnet.clarity.co.uk/Library/ViewItem/10b01c1e-bd73-494c-83de-b33f00d1b237>
- **Any questions?** Email nnicb-nn.medsoptimisation.support@nhs.net

PHARMACIST AND PHARMACY TECHNICIAN NETWORK – MEDICINES OPTIMISATION IN CARE HOMES

The ICB medicines optimisation team host a pharmacist and pharmacy technician network meeting for any local pharmacists or technicians involved in providing care to people in care homes. The network group meet quarterly to discuss relevant clinical topics (often with specialist guest speakers) and any challenges or questions that individuals might have faced in practice. If you would be interesting in joining the group or would like more information, please email either s.aslam@nhs.net or e.moncrieff@nhs.net

APC AND INTERFACE UPDATE

The latest updates from APC can be found on their website [here](#).

MAILING LIST

If you wish to be added or removed from the Prescribing Hints and Tips mailing list, please email e.moncrieff@nhs.net