

Prescribing Points



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**Oxfordshire
Clinical Commissioning Group**

Please let us know if you are receiving this newsletter and it is no longer relevant to you and also if you know a colleague that might find it useful so that we can keep our circulation list up to date. For queries, contact jane.lynch@oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk

This newsletter is for all health professionals in Oxfordshire and is written by the Medicines Management Team, Oxfordshire CCG, Jubilee House, Oxford Business Park South, Oxford, OX4 2LH

Pathway for Treating Vitamin D Deficiency

New vitamin D guidance in primary care has been added to our intranet. It outlines when to test vitamin D levels and when to prescribe vitamin D. It also describes which products to use. It can be found on the OCCG intranet [here](#)

Tramadol goes from POM to schedule 3 CD.

On 10th June tramadol changed to a scheduled 3 CD. This means that CD prescription handwriting conditions apply. ie total quantity in words and figures. Your computer prescribing system should do this automatically for you.

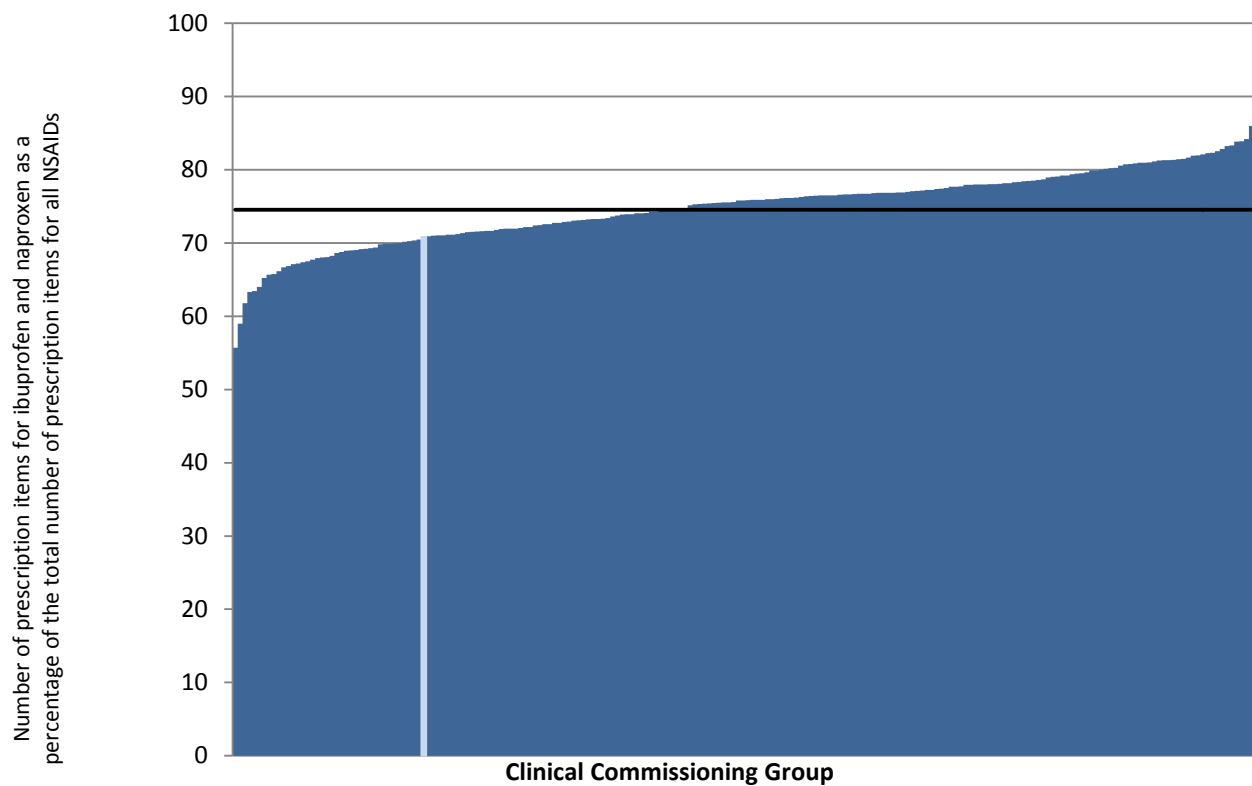
Tramadol can still be prescribed as a repeat item . The patient can tick the box on the white part of the script when they have run out. Your normal procedures for ordering CDs on repeats should apply. In general prescriptions for Controlled Drugs in schedule 3 (as well as 2 and 4) are to be limited to a supply of up to 30 days treatment; exceptionally, to cover a justifiable clinical need and after consideration of any risk, a prescription can be issued for a longer period, but the reasons for the decision should be recorded in the patients notes.

Tramadol can now **not** go on **repeat dispensing** which means that it cannot go on a prescription that is issued with 6 copies underneath for the pharmacist to dispense a months worth at monthly intervals. Prescriptions for schedule 2 and 3 drugs can also not be issued via the electronic prescription system.

So What?

Review tramadol prescriptions to ensure they are not for more than 30 days supply and that none are on the repeat dispensing system or electronic prescription system .

NSAID prescribing in Oxfordshire compared to other counties



For the latest quarter (January 2014 - March 2014), 70.8% of prescription items for all NSAIDs in NHS Oxfordshire CCG were for ibuprofen and naproxen. This compares to 74.5% with Thames Valley Area Team and 74.5% nationally.

So What?

Oxfordshire prescribe less of the 'safer' NSAIDs such as ibuprofen and naproxen compared to other counties. Naproxen and low-dose ibuprofen are considered to have the most favourable thrombotic cardiovascular safety profiles of all non-selective NSAIDs

A recent MHRA warning stated that diclofenac is contraindicated in patients with established:

- ischaemic heart disease
- peripheral arterial disease
- cerebrovascular disease
- congestive heart failure (New York Heart Association [NYHA] classification II–IV)

Nitrofurantoin 50 mg Capsules

Macrochantin 50mg capsules (nitrofurantoin) have been discontinued by the manufacturer and replaced with a generic nitrofurantoin 50mg capsule. This has resulted in nearly a fourfold increase in price from **£3.66** for 30 capsules to **£13.92** for 30 capsules. The most cost effective nitrofurantoin product available is currently the 100mg modified-release capsules given twice daily.

Product	Dose	Cost per pack	Cost per 3 day course
Nitrofurantoin 100mg MR capsules (Macrobid)	BD	£9.50	£4.07
Nitrofurantoin 50mg capsules	QDS	£13.92	£5.57
Nitrofurantoin 50mg tablets	QDS	£24.35	£10.44

So What?

Ensure that the most cost effective form of nitrofurantoin is prescribed when indicated. This is currently nitrofurantoin 100mg MR capsules. These recommendations have also been added to ScriptSwitch.

Magnesium glycerophosphate

In 2013/14 over £63,000 was spent on magnesium glycerophosphate across Oxfordshire CCG. A variety of different preparations are currently prescribed and costs can vary hugely between them.

Magnaphate 97.2mg chewable tablets (4mmol magnesium) are readily available via pharmacy wholesalers and could potentially reduce costs of magnesium glycerophosphate prescribing by 70%.

So what?

Ensure prescriptions for magnesium supplements are written as **Magnaphate chewable tablets** to ensure the most cost effective glycerophosphate product is supplied. This recommendation has been added to ScriptSwitch.

Fluoxetine dispersible tablets

Olena 20mg dispersible tablets is a new formulation of fluoxetine 20mg available from April 2014. This is a cost effective option for patients that have difficulty swallowing standard capsules and are scored and so can be easily split in half for patients on a reducing dose regimen. This preparation will be added to Scriptswitch as an alternative to fluoxetine oral solution 20mg/5ml and fluoxetine 10mg tablets (an unlicensed special preparation).

Product	Cost for 20mg/day for 28days
Fluoxetine 20mg capsules	£1.03
Fluoxetine 20mg dispersible (Olena)	£3.44
Fluoxetine 20mg/5ml oral solution	£8.48
Fluoxetine 10mg tab (unlicensed special - cost based on average cost to CCG over last 3 months)	£192

So what?

Consider using fluoxetine dispersible tablets if a liquid preparation would normally be indicated