

April 2008

In this issue:

- ❑ Raising awareness of bowel cancer in the pharmacy
- ❑ Uplift of medicines returned by patients – changes ahead
- ❑ New community pharmacy services in Lothian
- ❑ The use of Suboxone® in Lothian – phased introduction of substitute opiate
- ❑ Reporting adverse drug reactions in children
- ❑ Pharmacy on the internet
- ❑ You could be losing money!

Raising awareness of bowel cancer in the pharmacy

The Scottish bowel screening programme is starting in Lothian in May. This will result in people with bowel cancer being picked up early, maximising the chances of successful treatment. Men and women aged 50 to 74 will be sent a testing kit, known as the faecal occult blood test (FOBT), and asked to help protect their own health by taking part in the screening programme.

Bowel cancer is the third most common cancer in Scotland. Every year 3,500 people are diagnosed with the disease and 1,600 people die from it. Men are at higher risk than women.

Dr Dermot Gorman, who is leading the new screening programme for Lothian, said:
"We know the chances of successfully treating bowel cancer are much higher when the disease is detected at an early stage. I would urge everyone receiving the testing kit to take part in the scheme. The test is easy to do and this screening programme will save lives."



The Lothian programme is part of a national scheme being introduced across Scotland. Previous pilots in NHS Tayside and NHS Grampian have already proved that this screening programme will save lives.

Pharmacists are in an ideal position to raise awareness of this new programme among the public and encourage participation. The more people that take part in screening the more lives can be saved.

NHS Health Scotland, the national health promotion body, sent out information and publicity material on the programme in March to all Community Pharmacies and GP Practices. The pack has leaflets and posters for display in your pharmacy. It also has all the information you should need about the programme and

includes a patient pack so that you can see the test kits that are being used.

Further information is available at www.bowelscreening.scot.nhs.uk or via a helpline ☎ 0845 270 0030.

Thanks to Jane Bray, Specialist Registrar in Public Health, NHS Lothian.

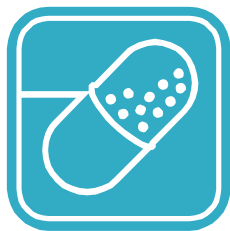
Uplift of medicines returned by patients – changes ahead

The uplift service of medicines returned by patients from Lothian community pharmacies will change from the 1st of June 2008. The commercial company Healthcare Environmental currently hold the contract, but the service is being brought in-house and will be undertaken by NHS Lothian Logistics, an NHS waste management service managed from St John's hospital. The handover will be seamless and pharmacies should see no disruption to normal service.

Final uplifts by Healthcare Environmental will be completed by the end of May 2008. There will be some changes as a result of this contract change, the main one being an increase in the number of uplifts. Further information on the change will be sent out to community pharmacies in April.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact Aleisha Hunter, Contractor Support Officer, Primary Care Contracts, ☎ 0131 537 8407.

Thanks to Aleisha Hunter, Pharmacy Contract Support Officer.



Treatment of Chlamydia infection in sexual partners - Azithromycin Pharmacy direct

Untreated *Chlamydia trachomatis* infection in women can lead to chronic pelvic pain, infertility and ectopic pregnancy. It is essential that sexual partners are also treated to prevent re-infection. However men are often reluctant to attend genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics for treatment for Chlamydia infection, which in the majority of cases has no symptoms. An audit carried out in Edinburgh in 2004, of the proportion of male partners of women with Chlamydia who attended the GUM clinic, showed that only 25 per cent of male partners eventually attended the clinic for treatment. Furthermore, due to increasing workload, many patients face a 3-week wait for a routine non-urgent appointment at GUM. In a recent questionnaire study of women with Chlamydia undertaken in Edinburgh, women often reported that their partners were "too embarrassed" to attend their GP for treatment.

A pilot project looking at treatment of sexual partners for Chlamydia infection via community pharmacies started in NHS Lothian in December 2007. All pharmacies in NHS Lothian had been approached for notes of interest earlier in the year. The project allows for men and women, aged 16 to 25 years, testing positive for Chlamydia to choose to give their partner(s) a 'voucher' that they can take to a participating pharmacy. This states that they are the partner of an individual with Chlamydia and should be treated (as per Lothian Joint Formulary recommendations) with 1 gram (four 250mg capsules) of azithromycin as a single dose.

The pharmacist will check that there are no contraindications before giving the individual the free dose of azithromycin via a patient group direction (PGD). The patient should take the azithromycin while on the pharmacy premises. The 'voucher' is then returned to the co-ordinating 'Chlamydia nurse' involved in this project (there is a number on the voucher that corresponds to the index patient) so that the number of men and women opting for treatment in this way can be determined.

Pharmacies will receive a £5 fee for treating each sexual partner, plus the corresponding British National Formulary cost for azithromycin.

The complete service packs which include the PGD and service specification were sent out to those pharmacies that indicated an interest in providing this service. This is an exciting opportunity that concentrates on the accessibility of community pharmacies and highlights a potential model for treatment via pharmacies without a PGD as prescribing rights become more widespread.

Thanks to Aileen Muir, Associate Director of Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Public Health.

Stop smoking services



Community pharmacies across Lothian started to deliver NHS stop smoking services in January of this year. This followed

three well attended training sessions at the end of last year. The sessions were organised, designed and delivered by the pharmacy team of Anne Lorimer, Pam Lorimer and Tracy Morton with great support and input from Fiona Moore, the smoking cessation co-ordinator for NHS Lothian. It is to their credit that they were able to produce the goods against a very challenging timescale.

The service has been set up on a pilot basis to establish appropriate systems and identify any improvements that could be made to the service. Over the first two months of the service around 80 people have set quit dates. This was achieved without all the trained pharmacies being able to deliver the service and with minimal advertising. As with all new services, there are a few creases that need to be ironed out and work continues to achieve a smooth running service.

During the period of time that the pilot service was being implemented, a new HEAT target for NHS Boards was set by the Scottish Government. The HEAT target for smokers quitting using specialist services is as follows:

"Through smoking cessation services, support 8% of your Board's smoking population in successfully quitting (at one-month post quit) over the period 2008/09 to 2010/11."

This is a challenging target and it is hoped that pharmacy will contribute greatly to meeting this target. There is therefore a lot of work going on to try to broaden out and fully implement the service.

The key to achieving success in helping as many clients as possible through the smoking cessation services will be that it is fully accessible to all (so that provision is provided by as many pharmacies as possible) and properly promoted and embedded within the other stop smoking services within NHS Lothian.

Community pharmacies are once again showing that their accessibility and close relationships with their clients makes them ideally placed to provide brief interventions relating to health improvement.

Pharmacy News will keep you updated on the development of this service.

The use of Suboxone® in Lothian – phased introduction of substitute opiate

NHS Lothian Formulary Committee has recommended that Suboxone® may be prescribed as an alternative substitute opiate treatment, by specialist services, when methadone is not suitable. However methadone will remain the first line maintenance therapy for opioid dependence.

Suboxone® is a combination of buprenorphine and naloxone, the intention of the naloxone component being to deter intravenous misuse and therefore reduce the risk of diversion. Suboxone® must be taken by the sublingual route and consumption should be supervised during the first three months.

Suboxone® will be introduced via a phased approach commencing April 2008. During the first phase new patients suitable for buprenorphine will commence Suboxone®. Phase two will involve those patients currently prescribed maintenance buprenorphine (Subutex®) being considered for a switch to Suboxone®.

In all cases the key worker will contact the community pharmacy in advance of the proposed prescription to agree participation in the supervision scheme and to help minimise medicine wastage.

Community pharmacists currently participating in the 'supervised buprenorphine scheme' have previously received training and the supervision process is the same for Suboxone® as it is for Subutex®. A Suboxone® information pack, containing local guidance and patient advice leaflets, will be sent out to all participating pharmacies towards the end of March. Payment for supervised consumption of Suboxone® will follow a similar process to that of Subutex®.

For further information please contact Elaine Rankine or Amanda Hart at the CDPS on ☎0131 537 8343.

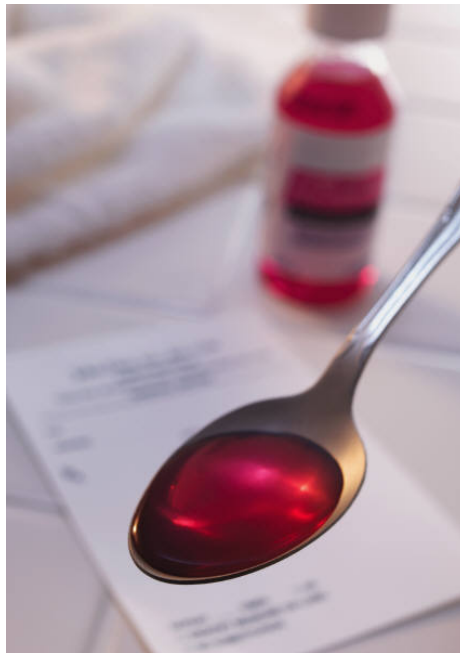
Subutex® will continue to be prescribed for opiate detoxification programmes due to the availability of low dose formulations.

Thanks to Jean Logan, Specialist Pharmacist in Substance Misuse, NHS Lothian.

Reporting adverse drug reactions in children

The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen University and the YellowCard Centre Scotland (see below under websites) are carrying out a study on the side effects of medicines in children. This study is being carried out in Lothian and Grampian NHS Board areas with community pharmacists being recruited into the study. Children under 16 years of age prescribed and dispensed anticonvulsants, SSRI antidepressants or ADHD treatments will be targeted. This averages out at approximately 11 children per pharmacy when looked at nationally.

The pharmacist will identify each eligible child prescribed one of the study drugs and attach an anonymised dispensing label to a questionnaire, and to a pharmacy-based recruitment log. No children will be excluded from the study. A questionnaire, for completion by the parent/guardian/child, will be handed out with a study information leaflet, along with the prescribed medicine.



The pharmacist will not seek informed consent but will emphasise the importance of the study to the individual collecting the prescription, and hand them an information leaflet, questionnaire, consent form for subsequent telephone interview and a reply paid envelope.

Invitations to participate have been sent to Lothian pharmacists from the research team, endorsed by Pat Murray, Director of Pharmacy. It is hoped that pharmacists will see this as a valuable study to contribute to and go along to the training which is on offer.

Thanks to Anne Lorimer, Pharmacy Locality Group Coordinator.

eMAS update...

There were 73,852 registrations in Lothian up to the end of December 2007, with 950 items dispensed. The number of registrations has started to rise again following a significant number of lapsed registrations. Of 7,909 consultations in the month of November, 178 were recorded as 'advice only' and 27 as referrals.

Pharmacy on the internet

The **Community Pharmacy website** www.communitypharmacy.scot.nhs.uk is currently being redesigned. MedicinesComplete is now available to community pharmacists in Scotland on the Community Pharmacy website, via an access-controlled area, thanks to an agreement between the Royal

Pharmaceutical Society's publishing organisation (RPS Publishing) and Community Pharmacy Scotland. Medicines Complete provides online access to some of the world's leading drug and healthcare references, including the major reference work, Martindale and Stockley's Drug Interactions.

Other useful websites for pharmacists

It is hard to know where to find that exact piece of information that we are looking for...so here are some useful websites that will help you to find those answers:

Lothian Joint Formulary	www.ljf.scot.nhs.uk	Local prescribing recommendations, including the Minor Ailments Formulary to support eMAS prescribing
NHS Education for Scotland (NES)	www.nes.scot.nhs.uk	Educational solutions for workforce development through design, commissioning, quality assurance and provision of education for NHSScotland staff
Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)	www.sign.ac.uk	National clinical guidelines with recommendations for effective practice based on current evidence
Community Pharmacy Scotland	www.communitypharmacyscotland.org.uk	The organisation which represents community pharmacy owners throughout Scotland
YellowCard Centre Scotland	www.yccscotland.scot.nhs.uk	Previously known as CSM Scotland, this is a joint venture between the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Scottish Government with the aim of improving drug safety in Scotland
NHS24	www.nhs24.com	Comprehensive up-to-date health information and self care advice for people in Scotland
Scottish Government publications	www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk	Publications from the Scottish Government Health Directorates
Clinical Knowledge Summaries	http://cks.library.nhs.uk/	Clinical knowledge on common conditions managed in primary and first contact care.

You could be losing money!

If the exemption status of the prescription is not clearly stated on the back, then the prescription will be transferred into the 'paid' bundle, and therefore the pharmacy contractor will lose the £6.85 charge for each item.

How can this be avoided?

- ✓ Please make sure that patients sign with a black pen and mark a clear cross in the relevant exemption box
- ✓ Keep a copy of your GP34 handy so that you can track your paid items
- ✗ Do not use a green pen to endorse prescriptions

Thanks to Fiona McCready, Community Pharmacist, Edinburgh.

If you have any comments on Pharmacy News, or wish to contribute to a future issue, please email:

anne.gilchrist@nhslotian.scot.nhs.uk

Deadline for submitting articles for next issue: end April 2008.

Read Pharmacy News on the Community Pharmacy website at www.communitypharmacy.scot.nhs.uk/HealthBoards/lothian.html