

Pharmacy & Medicines Directorate

Westholme
Woodend Hospital
Queens Road
ABERDEEN
AB15 6LS

TO ALL COMMUNITY PHARMACISTS WORKING WITHIN GRAMPIAN

Date: 31st August 2023
Our Ref: DP/LA/Specials
Enquiries to: David Pfleger
Extension: 56348
Direct Dial: 01224 556348
Email: david.pfleger@nhs.scot

Dear Colleagues

Update to “Special Formulation and Unlicensed Products in Primary Care – A Guide for Pharmacists Working within NHS Grampian”.

Thank you for your continued support in providing a cost-effective supply of special formulation/unlicensed products within NHS Grampian.

The “Special Formulation and Unlicensed Products in Primary Care – A Guide for Pharmacists Working within NHS Grampian” has been updated. A copy of the revised guidance has been included with this letter and is also available on the SHOW website and the NHS Scotland Community Pharmacy website.

<https://www.communitypharmacy.scot.nhs.uk/nhs-boards/nhs-grampian/specials-unlicensed-medicines/>

Please continue to send all requests for authorisation of unlicensed special formulations and imported unlicensed medicines (Specials) to:-

gram.specialsaberdeenshire@nhs.scot

Request for Authorisation to Order Specials

When requesting authorisation:-

- Ensure you have discussed with the prescriber the use of alternative licensed options or licensed medicines “off-label.”
- You must have discussed the request with the prescriber, then documented their name and designation on the form. The pharmacist supplying a Special bears shared clinical responsibility with the prescriber, as to the suitability and safety of the product for use by the patient.
- Ensure a blank ‘Request Form for Authorisation to Order Specials’ is completed for new requests.
Forms which previously contained information for another patient MUST NOT be used. This has occurred in the past and is a breach of NHS Grampian Confidentiality Policy.
- Ensure ‘quoted cost’ is for the full quantity that will be dispensed, to ensure you are authorised for the full costs incurred.
- Prescription details recorded on the request form must be accurate e.g. dose as per instructions on the prescription, to allow the Specials Team to advise on the most cost effective product.
- Email the fully completed form, attached as a Word document, to allow the Specials Team to update and return the request for authorisation. Failure to follow the advice above will cause a delay in the authorisation process and may result in the request form being returned to you.

Midazolam Buccal 10mg/ml Oral Solution – has been added to the pre-authorized list, as it is no longer listed in Part 7U of the Drug Tariff. If you are unable to obtain supply at the expected cost on the pre-authorized list, authorisation must be obtained.

Endorsing

We continue to have significant pricing errors (requiring payment adjustments) which have occurred due to missing or inaccurate endorsements, especially with vitamins and minerals when over the counter products have been supplied rather than an unlicensed medicine. A section on endorsing is included in the updated guidance attached with this letter. If you are in doubt about endorsing a prescription for a 'special', further guidance from Practitioner Services Division (PSD) can be found at: <https://nhsnss.org/services/practitioner/pharmacy/endorsing-guide/full-table-ofcontents/>

Please note, it is important to ensure the electronic endorsement matches any handwritten annotation made on the prescription.

Vitamins and Minerals

Before obtaining an unlicensed medicinal product for vitamins and minerals, you should discuss with the prescriber the availability of alternative products and the costs. If an over the counter product (food supplement grade) is available that is not a licensed medicine, the prescriber may decide that this can be supplied, rather than an unlicensed medicine. If the unlicensed medicine is requested, authorisation must be obtained.

Re-authorisations

There has been increase in the amount of contractors not submitting requests for 're-authorisation at 12 months' or when there has been a price increase above 20%.

In line with PCA(P)(2015)17), all specials should be re-authorized after 12 months if a continued supply is still required. When a current authorisation expires and you receive/ expect to receive further prescriptions, you must confirm continued clinical appropriateness with a prescriber. In the discussion with the prescriber, please make them aware of any new licensed products that may be an alternative option. Please refer to the 'Reauthorisation at 12 months' section of the guidance attached with this letter.

Failure to request re-authorisation may result in receiving a 'Reclaim of Excessive Cost for Un-authorized Special Preparations' letter from Primary Care Contracts, if the cost claimed is higher than the expected cost.

Imported Medicines

Where a medicine requires to be imported, due to a medicine shortage and a licensed alternative is not suitable, this should only occur until supply of the licensed product returns, unless there is a difference in bioavailability between products and where discussion with the prescriber must be undertaken before any change.

NHS Grampian Specials List

A copy of the revised list is appended to this letter and is also available from the Specials Team: - gram.specialsaberdeenshire@nhs.scot

If you have any questions about sourcing a specific unlicensed product or about the authorisation process in general, please do not hesitate to contact the Specials Team for advice.

I thank you for your continued support in providing a cost effective supply of special formulation/unlicensed products, within NHS Grampian.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Pflieger', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Pflieger
Director of Pharmacy
NHS GRAMPIAN

NHS Grampian Specials List: Version 15 (List correct August 2023)

- This list identifies products for which pre-authorisation is granted and the price we expect it can be obtained.
- The suppliers listed are purely suggestions and the costs quoted will be the maximum paid to a pharmacy ordering these products from any source.
- Pharmacy contractors are still required to discuss the appropriateness of supplying these unlicensed products with the prescriber.

Please Note: The adjacent pricing information is Commercial in Confidence and access to this pricing is restricted to NHS staff, on a need to know basis only.

Product	Expected cost	May be obtained from	Notes
Ciclosporin Eye Ointment	£63.50 for 3.5g	Rokshaw 0191 5106500 Aclardian 01954 213490	
Levomepromazine 6mg Tablets			Licensed product now available. The licensed product cannot be dispersed in water. For patients unable to swallow tablets, unlicensed tablets that can be dispersed in water are available from Prulab or Eaststone. These supplies will require authorisation.
L-Tryptophan 500mg Capsules	£42.00 for 84 capsules	Movianto 0300 303 3076	
Melatonin Capsules, Tablets and Liquid			Licensed Melatonin 3mg Tablets are now the first line choice. Refer to the guidance issued July 2021 – see links below ..\Product Information\Melatonin\Melatonin Prescribing Update June 2021.pdf

			..\Product Information\Melatonin\Melatonin LiquidReviewFINAL20720.pdf
Product	Expected cost	May be obtained from	Notes
Metolazone 2.5mg & 5mg Tablets			Licensed 5mg Tablets now available which are scored and can be halved
Midazolam Buccal 10mg/ml Oral Solution	£48.00 for 5ml	Ethigen 01355 598150 Target 08456 180036	No longer on Drug Tariff Part 7U
Sucralfate 1g Tablets	£11.00 for 40 tablets	Ethigen 01355 598150	
Sucralfate 1g/5ml Suspension			Licensed product now available
Sucralfate Enema		Pharmaceutical Specials Services Tayside	Authorisation is not required if obtained from Pharmaceutical Specials Services Tayside
Trimetazidine 20mg Tablets	£32.00 for 60 tablets	Clinigen 01932 824 100	

Diltiazem 2% Cream and Ointment

Diltiazem 2% Cream is the product of choice in NHS Grampian for anal fissures and listed in the NHS Grampian Formulary. Diltiazem 2% Cream is also in the Drug Tariff Part 7S, therefore no authorisation is required.

Prescriptions for Diltiazem 2% Ointment – please confirm with prescriber/pharmacotherapy team, that this product has been specifically requested by the Speciality.

Vitamins and Minerals:

These items are not usually classed as medicines and PSD may refer contractors to their Health Board for approval to supply. A discussion with the prescriber must cover **all** products available, including over the counter products and the costs. We do not expect supplies to come from a Specials manufacturer unless specifically requested by the prescriber - in this situation, authorisation must be obtained.

Please refer to the table below, as a reference, for the cost we would expect for two products available as over the counter products. Seek advice if looking to obtain a product at a higher price.

Vitamin	Strength	Pack Size	Expected Cost
Colecalciferol	400units Tablets	120	£4.05
	1000units Tablets	30	£3.16

Vitamin E	75iu Capsules	100	£8.00
	200iu Capsules	100	£8.00