

## **Rybelsus® (semaglutide tablets): Transition to New Formulation and Risk of Medication Error**

All healthcare professionals involved in the recommendation, prescribing and supply of medicine are asked to be alert to changes in the formulation and strength of semaglutide tablets (brand name Rybelsus®).

This is a company led change. The new formulation (round tablets) have better bioavailability than the original tablets (oval):

- 1.5mg new round tablet is bioequivalent to 3mg original oval tablet
- 4mg new round tablet is bioequivalent to 7mg original oval tablet
- 9mg new round tablet is bioequivalent to 14mg original oval tablet

Semaglutide (Rybelsus®) should be taken as one tablet daily.

As a biologic medicine semaglutide should be prescribed by the brand name Rybelsus®

### **Prescribing in NHS Grampian:**

- Approximately 1300 patients are currently prescribed semaglutide (Rybelsus®) tablets in NHS Grampian.
- Both Vision and EMIS prescribing systems are now able to prescribe the new strengths of semaglutide (Rybelsus®).
- Both the original and new formulations will co-exist in the network, and on Primary Care IT systems, while this changeover takes place.
- Supplies of the original tablets are anticipated to have limited availability from the end of January 2026.
- It is imperative that patients are aware of these changes, the strength and dosage of the new tablets and how to take their medicine.
- ScriptSwitch messages have been enacted to support the switch, with links to healthcare professional and patient communications.

### **Recommended Actions for Prescribers:**

All patients currently prescribed semaglutide (Rybelsus®) oval original tablets will require to have their prescriptions amended to the appropriate bioequivalent strength of the new round tablet formulation.

- Liaise with community pharmacy to consider using any residual stocks of the original tablets and agree a timescale for the change.
- Change patients prescribing from the original to the new equivalent strength of Rybelsus® tablets. (As a biologic medicine it is advised that semaglutide tablets should be prescribed by the brand name Rybelsus®)
- Ensure that patients are aware of the change and how to continue to take their medicines correctly. Community pharmacy can also assist with patient counselling.
- Remove the old strengths of semaglutide (Rybelsus®) from the practice formulary list to minimise risk of mis-selection until they are completely removed from the IT systems.

## **Recommended Actions for Community Pharmacy:**

- Liaise with Primary Care colleagues to work collaboratively to manage this change.
- Counsel patients/carers when they are being issued with a supply of the new strength of Rybelsus®.

## **Patient Information:**

To all healthcare professionals involved in the care of patients taking Rybelsus® tablets – see below patient counselling points (as per [Drug Safety Update & Patient Information Sheet](#)):

- Rybelsus® tablets have been modified so that the medicine is more easily absorbed by your body.
- The new and modified tablets are just as effective as the old tablets, but have a smaller dose.
- It will work the same as the old tablets even though the dose is different.
- The tablets will now be smaller and round in shape.
- Continue to take one tablet per day.
- See leaflet for further information and speak to your pharmacist or prescriber if you have any concerns.

## **Further information**

- [Drug Safety Update](#)
- [Direct Healthcare Professional Communication](#)
- [Patient Information Sheet](#)