

# **Local Supply Issues – Inhalers; Salbutamol, ICS and ICS/LABA Combinations**

Updated: 9<sup>th</sup> April 2020

## **Background**

- At present in the UK there is significant demand in the supply chain for Respiratory Inhaler products and this is leading to wholesalers suffering from out of stock situations. This is not a Coronavirus related supply issue but is linked to increased demand. Demand is reported for certain inhalers to be up by 400% from usual business.<sup>1</sup>
- The majority of manufacturers that our Medicines Optimisation Team have contacted have confirmed that stock is available of inhalers and being delivered regularly to the three major wholesalers AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix, in addition to several other smaller distributors.
- However, due to increased demand at wholesaler level, the stocks that are being delivered by the manufacturer are rapidly become depleted.
- It is this increase in demand that is resulting in local shortages within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- We are still receiving reports from Community Pharmacy colleagues that they are seeing an exceptional increase in the number of patients presenting prescriptions for inhalers (a FOUR fold increase).
- In some instances, the patients concerned have not requested these on prescription for many years and actually may no longer require this treatment.

## **Alternative agents and management options**

**We need our prescribers to think very carefully about whether there is a continued need for these inhalers when requested and also consider taking the following actions urgently:**

- Discuss with those patients who have not ordered a repeat prescription for an inhaler for more than 4 months if this is still clinically required. It is important that good control is maintained. Patients should be assessed on an individual basis. For example, if the patient is receiving regular short-acting beta-2 agonist inhalers (e.g. salbutamol) and are now requesting an inhaled corticosteroid (ICS) then this is most likely to be an appropriate issue, compared to those who have had no type of inhaler at all.<sup>1</sup>
- If the inhaler is deemed necessary, **please continue to only write monthly repeat prescriptions, i.e. prescribe only a quantity of ONE inhaler at a time, rather than writing a prescription for several months.**<sup>1</sup> Consider using eRD or post-dated prescription where the inhaler is used regularly and only for the prescribing interval deemed is appropriate based on the dose prescribed and the number of actuations in the inhaler.<sup>1</sup>
- Encourage patients NOT to stockpile inhalers at home and to order prescriptions as per their advice from their medical practice.<sup>1</sup>
- Pharmacies/dispensaries should only order supplies through the wholesalers for prescriptions that require dispensing and to replace stocks to minimal levels – please do not stockpile inhalers.<sup>1</sup>
- Ensure patients are aware of dose counters on inhalers (where applicable) and to know how to recognise if their inhaler requires replacing.

Based on local shortages for inhaler devices reported to the Medicines Optimisation Team over the last week, we have put together the following tables which demonstrates availability of inhaler devices for SABA, ICS and ICS/LABA combination inhalers used for both asthma and COPD indications.

Where patients do not have sufficient supplies of their usual inhalers, patients should be supported, in the first instance, to liaise with local pharmacies directly to ascertain their stock levels as different pharmacies use a range of wholesalers.

## **Switching inhalers to manage the supply chain<sup>1</sup>**

- Avoid switching between different types of inhalers unless essential to ensure continuity of patient treatment. If an alternative inhaler is required try and ensure patients are switched to an alternative class of inhaler device (i.e. Aerosol (e.g. pMDI, Easi-Breathe, Autohaler) or Dry powder inhalers).
- Switching patients may put additional strain onto the alternate inhaler supply chain therefore should only be considered where no local stocks of their usual inhaler(s) are available.
- Where supplies of the patient's usual inhalers are not available, this table may be used as a guide to support in finding alternative inhalers devices. In certain circumstances, where none of the patient's usual inhaler is available, it may be necessary to switch patients, where clinically appropriate.
- The British Thoracic Society (BTS) have put together information on inhaler dose comparison also that you may find helpful (available at: <https://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/document-library/quality-improvement/covid-19/bts-information-respiratory-inhalers/>).
- Consult the SPC ([www.medicines.org.uk](http://www.medicines.org.uk) ) for products, particularly to confirm licensing and indication.
- It is important to counsel the patient and their carers as appropriate, about any change to their medication BEFORE any change is made. This is especially important when a new device is prescribed, so that the patient is counselled accordingly on how to use the device correctly. Face to face counselling may not be appropriate at this current time but please refer patients to the Asthma UK or Right Breather website below.
- The Asthma UK website (available at: <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/inhaler-videos>) and Right Breathe website (available at: <https://www.rightbreathe.com/>) provide information on all inhaler devices available including training videos demonstrating correct inhaler technique to support you in counselling patients.

### SHORT ACTING BETA-2 AGONISTS (SABA)

#### **SALBUTAMOL**

***Salbutamol pMDIs are the only inhaler device which may be prescribed generically to facilitate local supply issues.***

<i>Brand, Inhaler type (Manufacturer)</i>	<i>Strength</i>	<i>Age Range</i>	<i>Stock Availability</i>
Salbutamol Easyhaler (Orion Pharma)	100mcg	From aged 4 years	<b>Available</b> – no issues reported.
	200mcg		
Salamol pMDI (Converse Pharma Group)	100mcg	Adults and children	<b>Available</b> through AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix.
Salamol Easi-Breathe BAI (Teva)	100mcg	From aged 4 years	<b>Available</b>
Airomir pMDI and Autohaler (BAI (Teva)	100mcg	Paediatric license held but no age specified.	<b>Available</b> through AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix.
Ventolin Evohaler pMDI (GlaxoSmithKline)	100mcg	From aged 4 years	<b>Available</b> through AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix.
Ventolin Accuhaler BAI (GlaxoSmithKline)	200mcg	From aged 4 years	<b>Available</b> through AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix.

\*Please note that the doses demonstrated, do not cover every dose that is available for each device. Therefore, the equivalent dose of beclometasone dipropionate (BDP) may need to be worked out individually for doses which are not listed. Please do not hesitate to contact the Medicines Optimisation Team for further support on the BDP equivalent doses for individual patients via [CAPCCG.prescribingpartnership@nhs.net](mailto:CAPCCG.prescribingpartnership@nhs.net).

**\*\*Whilst it might seem appropriate to prescribe inhalers generically (specifically beclometasone dipropionate) this is NOT RECOMMENDED due to formulations with different particles sizes and therefore differing potencies.**

INHALED CORTICOSTEROID INHALERS (ICS)						
BECLOMETASONE DIPROPIONATE (STANDARD PARTICLE SIZES)						
Brand, Inhaler type (Manufacturer)	Strength	Dose*	Corticosteroid total daily dose	Beclometasone dipropionate (BDP) equivalent dose	Age Range	Stock Availability
Clenil Modulite pMDI (Chiesi)  <i>Licensed for use in Asthma only.</i>	50mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	200mcg	200mcg	Children and adults. The 200mcg and 250mcg are not licensed in children.	<b>Available</b> – recent issue with 100mcg strength only, see separate <a href="#">shortage memo for Clenil Modulite</a> .  Due to increased demand wholesalers are experiencing out of stock situations whilst they await replenishment from Chiesi  See their website for further information: <a href="https://www.chiesi.uk.com/supply-of-chiesi-products">https://www.chiesi.uk.com/supply-of-chiesi-products</a>
	100mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	400mcg	400mcg		
	200mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	800mcg	800mcg		
	250mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	1000mcg	1000mcg		
Soprobeq pMDI (Glenmark)	50mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	200mcg	200mcg	Children and adults.	<b>Available</b> – however, it is taking time for wholesalers to replenish stock due to increased demand.

<i>Licensed for use in Asthma only.</i>	100mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	400mcg	400mcg	The 200mcg and 250mcg are not licensed in children.	There is stock waiting to be checked in at both AAH and Alliance Healthcare.
	200mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	800mcg	800mcg		
	250mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	1000mcg	1000mcg		
Easyhaler Beclometasone BAI (Orion)  <i>Licensed for use in Asthma only.</i>	200mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	800mcg	800mcg	Adults only.	<b>Available</b> – AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix.
<b>BECLOMETASONE DIPROPIONATE (**EXTRA FINE PARTICLE SIZES):</b> <b>Please note that Kelhale and Qvar are not interchangeable with Clenil Modulite and Soprobec. Kelhale and Qvar have extra fine particles and are approximately twice as potent as Clenil Modulite and Soprobec.</b>						
Kelhale pMDI (Cipla)  <i>Licensed for use in Asthma only.</i>	50mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	200mcg	400mcg	Adults only	<b>Issues</b> – 50mcg strength currently out of stock, should be available w/c 13/04/20.  <b>Available</b> – 100mcg strength.
	100mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	400mcg	800mcg		
Qvar pMDI, Autohaler BAI and Easi-Breathe BAI (Teva)  <i>Licensed for use in Asthma only.</i>	50mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	200mcg	400mcg	Qvar pMDI and Autohaler are licensed for children aged 5 and above. Qvar Easi-Breather is licensed aged 12 and above.	<b>Issues</b> - Shortages are being reported by AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix.
	100mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	400mcg	800mcg		

<b>BUDESONIDE</b>						
Pulmicort Turbohaler BAI (AstraZeneca)  <i>Licensed for use in Asthma only.</i>	100mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	200mcg	200mcg	From aged 5 years.	<b>Available</b> - AAH are the main wholesaler and are increasing deliveries to the depots nationwide this week due to increased demand. There are no stock shortage issues reported by them at present.
	200mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	400mcg	400mcg		
	400mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	800mcg	800mcg		
Easyhaler Budesonide BAI (Orion)  <i>Licensed for use in Asthma only.</i>	100mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	200mcg	200mcg	Children 6 years and over and adults	<b>Available</b> – AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix.
	200mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	400mcg	400mcg		
	400mg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	800mcg	800mcg		
<b>FLUTICASONE PROPIONATE</b>						
Flixotide Evohaler pMDI (GlaxoSmithKline)  <i>Licensed for use in Asthma only.</i>	50mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	200mcg	400mcg	Children over 4 years and adults. <b>The maximum licensed dose in children is 200 micrograms twice daily.</b>	<b>Available</b> - AAH, Alliance and Phoenix.
	125mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	500mcg	1000mcg		
	250mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	1000mcg	2000mcg		

Flixotide Accuhaler BAI (GlaxoSmithKline)  <i>Licensed for use in  Asthma only.</i>	50mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	100mcg	200mcg	Children over 4 years and adults. <b>The  maximum  licensed  dose in  children is  200  micrograms  twice daily.</b>	<b>Available</b> - AAH, Alliance and Phoenix.
	100mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	200mcg	400mcg		
	250mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	500mcg	1000mcg		
	500mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	1000mcg	2000mcg		



**\*\*Whilst it might seem appropriate to prescribe inhalers generically (specifically beclomethasone dipropionate) this is NOT RECOMMENDED due to formulations with different particles sizes and therefore differing potencies.**

INHALED CORTICOSTEROID AND LONG ACTING BETA-2 AGONIST COMBINATION INHALERS (ICS/LABA)						
BUDESONIDE/FORMOTEROL FUMARATE DIHYDRATE						
Brand, Inhaler type (Manufacturer)	Strength	Dose	Corticosteroid total daily dose	Beclomethasone dipropionate (BDP) equivalent dose	Age Range	Stock Availability
Symbicort Turbohaler BAI (AstraZeneca)  <i>Licensed for use in both Asthma and COPD.</i>	100/6mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	400mcg	400mcg	Maintenance therapy from 6 years. MART from 12 years.	<b>Available</b> – no supply issues and have increased capacity.
	200/6mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	800mcg	800mcg	Maintenance therapy from 12 years. MART from 12 years.	
	400/12mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	800mcg	800mcg	Maintenance therapy from 18 years.	
DuoResp Spiromax BAI (Teva)	160/4.5mcg (equivalent to a metered)	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff	400mcg	400mcg	From 18 years of age.	<b>Available</b> – no issues reported.

<i>Licensed for use in both Asthma and COPD.</i>	dose of 200/6mcg)	twice a day				
	320/9mcg (equivalent to a metered dose of 400/12mcg)	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	800mcg	800mcg		
<b>FLUTICASONE PROPIONATE/SALMETEROL XINAFOATE</b>						
AirFluSal pMDI (Sandoz)	125/25mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	500mcg	1000mcg	From 18 years.	<b>Available</b> (correct as of 03/04/2020).
	250/25mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	1000mcg	2000mcg		
Combisal pMDI (Aspire Pharma)  <i>For use in Asthma only.</i>	50/25mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	200mcg	400mcg	From 4 years.	<b>Available</b> – AAH and Alliance Healthcare.
	125/25mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	500mcg	1000mcg		
	250/25mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	1000mcg	2000mcg		
Sereflo pMDI (Fannin)	125/25mcg	Inhale TWO	500mcg	1000mcg	From 18 years.	<b>Available</b> – no issues reported from Cipla.

<i>For use in Asthma only.</i>		puffs twice a day				
	250/25mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	1000mcg	2000mcg		
Seretide Evohaler pMDI (GlaxoSmithKline)  <i>For use in Asthma only.</i>	50/25mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	200mcg	400mcg	From 4 years.	<b>Available</b> – AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix are being delivered to depots as usual. There is an increased demand for these products.
	125/25mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	500mcg	1000mcg		
	250/25mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	1000mcg	2000mcg		
Seretide Accuhaler BAI (GlaxoSmithKline)  <i>For use in Asthma and COPD.</i>	100/50mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	200mcg	400mcg	From 4 years – maximum licensed dose for fluticasone delivered by Seretide Accuhaler is 100mcg BD.	<b>Available</b> – all strengths via AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix.
	250/50mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff twice a day	500mcg	1000mcg		
	500/50mcg	Inhale <b>ONE</b> puff	1000mcg	2000mcg		

		twice a day			are licensed for over 12 years.	
Sirdupla pMDI (Mylan) <i>For use in Asthma only.</i>	125/25mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	500mcg	1000mcg	From 18 years.	<b>Available</b> – AAH and Alliance Healthcare.
	250/25mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	1000mcg	2000mcg		
<b>BECLOMETASONE DIPROPIONATE/FORMOTEROL FUMARATE DIHYDRATE (**EXTRA FINE PARTICLE SIZES)</b>						
Fostair pMDI (Chiesi)  <i>Fostair 100/6 pMDI is licensed for use in both Asthma and COPD.</i>  <i>Fostair 200/6 pMDI is licensed for use in Asthma only.</i>	100/6mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	400mcg	1000mcg	From 18 years.	<b>Available</b> – however, due to increased demand wholesalers are experiencing out of stock situations whilst they await replenishment from Chiesi. See their website for further information: <a href="https://www.chiesi.uk.com/supply-of-chiesi-products">https://www.chiesi.uk.com/supply-of-chiesi-products</a>
	200/6mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	800mcg	2000mcg		
<b>FLUTICASONE PROPIONATE/ FORMOTEROL FUMARATE DIHYDRATE</b>						
Flutiform pMDI (NAPP Pharmaceuticals)  <i>For use in Asthma only.</i>	50/5mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	200mcg	400mcg	From 5 years	<b>Available</b> - from AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix.
	125/5mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	500mcg	1000mcg	From 12 years	

	250/10mcg	Inhale TWO puffs twice a day	1000mcg	2000mcg	From 18 years	
<b>FLUTICASONE FUROATE/ VILANTEROL</b>						
Relvar Ellipta BAI (GlaxoSmithKline)  <i>Relvar 92mcg/22mcg is licensed for both in Asthma and COPD.</i>	100/25mcg	Inhale <b><u>ONE</u></b> puff <b><u>once</u></b> <b><u>daily</u></b>	100mcg	1000mcg	From 12 years	<b>Available</b> – GSK are reporting no stock issues through AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Phoenix.
<i>Relvar 184mcg/22mcg is licensed for Asthma only.</i>	200/25mcg	Inhale <b><u>ONE</u></b> puff <b><u>once</u></b> <b><u>daily</u></b>	200mcg	2000mcg		

**Key:**

MART = maintenance and reliever therapy

pMDI = pressurised metered-dose inhaler

BAI = breath-actuated inhaler

## References

1. BTS Information: Respiratory Inhalers. Updated 01 April 2020. Available at: <https://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/document-library/quality-improvement/covid-19/bts-information-respiratory-inhalers/> (accessed 03/04/20).
2. British National Formulary. Updated 11 March 2020. Available at: <https://bnf.nice.org.uk/> (accessed 23/03/2020).
3. Personal communication with manufacturers; Aspire Pharma, AstraZeneca, Chiesi, Cipla EU Ltd, Converse Pharma Group, Fannin, GlaxoSmithKline, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, Mylan, NAPP Pharmaceuticals, Orion Pharma and Teva.
4. Orion Pharma. Summary of Product Characteristics for Salbutamol Easyhaler 100mcg. Last updated June 2003. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/6339/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
5. Converse Pharma Group. Summary of Product Characteristics for Salamol pMDI 100mcg. Last updated March 2014. Personal Communication from Converse Pharma Group.
6. Teva UK. Summary of Product Characteristics for Salamol Easi-Breathe 100mcg. Last updated April 2010. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/2070> (accessed 24/03/2020).
7. GlaxoSmithKline. Summary of Product Characteristics for Ventolin Evohaler 100mcg. Last updated Feb 2011. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/850/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
8. GlaxoSmithKline. Summary of Product Characteristics for Ventolin Accuhaler 200mcg (GlaxoSmithKline). Last updated Aug 2010. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/849> (accessed 24/03/2020).
9. Chiesi UK. Summary of Product Characteristics for Clenil Modulite 100mcg. Last updated Dec 2018. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/6975/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
10. Glenmark Pharmaceuticals. Summary of Product Characteristics for Soprobec 50mcg. Last updated Dec 2018. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/9806/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
11. Cipla EU Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Kelhale 100mcg. Last updated March 2020. <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/10118/pil> (accessed 24/03/2020).
12. Teva UK. Summary of Product Characteristics for Qvar MDI 100 micrograms. Last updated Nov 2019. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/605/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
13. AstraZeneca. Summary of Product Characteristics for Pulmicort Turbohaler 100. Last updated June 2017. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/1692/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
14. AstraZeneca. Summary of Product Characteristics for Symbicort Turbohaler 100/6. Last updated Nov 2018. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/1326/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
15. Teva UK. Summary of Product Characteristics for DuoResp Spiromax 160/4.5. Last updated April 2019. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/3323/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
16. Aspire Pharma. Summary of Product Characteristics for Combisal 25mcg/50mcg. Last updated April 2018. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/9178/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
17. Fannin. Summary of Product Characteristics for Sereflo 25mcg/125mcg. Last updated Aug 2019. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/10146/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).

18. GlaxoSmithKline. Summary of Product Characteristics for Seretide 125 Evohaler. Last updated Nov 2019. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/7599/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
19. GlaxoSmithKline. Summary of Product Characteristics for Seretide 100 Accuhaler. Last updated Nov 2019. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/5504/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
20. Mylan. Summary of Product Characteristics for Sirdupla 25mcg/125mcg. Last updated Aug 2019. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/2539/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
21. Chiesi UK. Summary of Product Characteristics for Fostair 100mcg/6mcg. Last updated Feb 2020. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/6318/smpc> (accessed 24/03/2020).
22. NAPP Pharmaceuticals. Summary of Product Characteristics for Flutiform 50mcg/5mcg. Last updated Oct 2018. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/4277> (accessed 24/03/2020).
23. GlaxoSmithKline. Summary of Product Characteristics for Relvar Ellipta 92mcg/22mcg. Last updated Dec 2018. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/5226> (accessed 24/03/2020).
24. PrescQIPP. Asthma, COPD, ICS and NRAD materials supplied by Surrey Downs CCG. Available at: <https://www.prescqipp.info/media/2532/ics-doses-and-steps-in-management-of-asthma-surrey-downs-ccg.pptx> (accessed 24/03/2020).
25. BTS/SIGN (July 2019). Guideline for the management of asthma 2019. Available at: <https://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/document-library/guidelines/asthma/btssign-guideline-for-the-management-of-asthma-2019/> (accessed 24/03/2020).
26. NICE TA138 (March 2008). Inhaled corticosteroids for the treatment of chronic asthma in adults and in children aged 12 years and over. Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta138/chapter/3-the-technologies> (accessed 24/03/2020).
27. NICE (July 2018). Inhaled corticosteroid doses for NICE's asthma guideline. Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng80/resources/inhaled-corticosteroid-doses-pdf-4731528781> (accessed 24/03/2020).
28. Orion Pharma. Summary of Product Characteristics for Easyhaler Beclometasone 200mcg/dose inhalation powder. Last updated January 2017. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/239/smpc> (accessed 02/04/2020).
29. Orion Pharma. Summary of Product Characteristics for Easyhaler Budesonide 100mcg. Last updated April 2017. Available at: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/241/smpc> (accessed 02/04/2020).

**Document prepared by and for all correspondence contact:**

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG Medicines Optimisation Team. 25 March 2020, 3 April 2020 and 9 April 2020 email: [CAPCCG.prescribingpartnership@nhs.net](mailto:CAPCCG.prescribingpartnership@nhs.net)

**Disclaimer:** *This memo can be adapted for local use. The content does not reflect national guidance. Some of this memo is based on **clinical opinion** from practitioners. Users should bear this in mind in deciding whether to base their policy on this document. Individual trusts should ensure that procedures for unlicensed medicines are followed where a foreign import drug is required in the interim. Any decision to prescribe off-label must take into account the relevant GMC guidance and NHS Trust governance procedures for unlicensed medicines. Prescribers are advised to pay particular attention to the risks associated with using unlicensed medicines or using a licensed medicine off-label. Unlicensed medicines: In line with GMC guidance you should usually prescribe licensed medicines in accordance with the terms of their license. However, you may prescribe unlicensed medicines, where, on the basis of assessment of the individual patient, you conclude, for medical reasons, that it is necessary to do so to meet the specific needs of the patient. Prescribing unlicensed medicines may be necessary where there is no suitably licensed medicine that will meet the patient's needs. For example, where a suitably licensed medicine that would meet the patient's need is not available. This may arise where, for example, there is a temporary shortage in supply. As with all prescribing, the prescriber is medically and legally responsible for the prescriptions they sign and for their decisions and actions when they supply and administer medicines or authorise or instruct others to do so.*