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**1. MHRA Alert April 2014**

The MHRA produced the following alert in April 2014.  This reflects incidents that have occurred locally and therefore please bring this to the attention of all pharmacists and dispensing staff.

<http://www.mhra.gov.uk/Safetyinformation/DrugSafetyUpdate/CON397543>

**Dispensing errors: please ensure appropriate precautions are in place**

Pharmacists and dispensers should take care to ensure that checking procedures are in place to reduce the risk of drug-name confusions and drug strength and quantity confusions. For controlled drugs these procedures should include recording the strength of the product and the quantity dispensed. Guidance is available from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society’s Medicines Ethics and Practice.

**Morphine sulfate preparations: new packaging to help ensure correct strength is dispensed**

The packaging of some morphine sulfate products is being updated to better highlight the strength of the medicine on the pack.  The new packs will begin to appear in the marketplace from April onwards.

This measure is in response to a recent fatal dispensing error, in which 60 milligram capsules of morphine sulfate were supplied instead of 10 milligram capsules. The error was due to confusion between the declaration of the capsule strength and the declaration of the quantity of capsules in the pack. Please be aware when dispensing morphine sulfate preparations.

**Drug-name confusion: vigilance required**

Drugs names that look alike or sound alike (or both) can also lead to medication errors (see Drug Safety Update article April 2013). There was a case of confusion between bumetanide (a diuretic) and buspirone (a treatment for anxiety disorders), resulting a person receiving the wrong medicine which contributed to that person’s death.

Please report medication errors to [england.pharmacy-athsm@nhs.net](mailto:england.pharmacy-athsm@nhs.net) as well as through the National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS)

<https://www.eforms.nrls.nhs.uk/staffreport/>

and harm occurred, on a Yellow Card ([www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard)).



**2. Changes in Legislation  : 10 JUNE 2014**

It has been confirmed that the following legislative changes will come into force on **Tuesday 10 June 2014**:

**Tramadol** will become a schedule 3 controlled drug (CD No Register POM), but will be exempt from Safe Custody Regulations.

**Lisdexamfetamine** will become a schedule 2 controlled drug (CD POM)

**Zopiclone** and **Zaleplon** will become schedule 4 part 1 controlled drugs (CD Benz POM)

The table below summarises various characteristics of the affected drugs that will apply from **Tuesday 10 June 2014**.



|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Tramadol** | **Lisdexamfetamine** | **Zopiclone** | **Zaleplon** |
| **Designation from 10th June 2014** | Schedule 3 (CD No Reg POM) | Schedule 2 (CD POM) | Schedule 4 (Part I) | Schedule 4 (Part I) |
| **Safe Custody Regulations apply** | No | Yes | No | No |
| **Controlled Drug Prescription requirements\*** | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| **Prescription valid for** | 28 days | 28 days | 28 days | 28 days |
| **Address of the prescriber required to be within the UK** | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| **EEA and Swiss prescribers can legally prescribe** | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| **Prescription is repeatable\*** | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| **Emergency supply** | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| **Controlled drug Requisition necessary** | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| **Requisition to be marked by supplier** | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| **License required to import or export** | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **Denature before disposal\*** | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

\*See MEP 37 section 3.7 for further information

We expect to publish further professional guidance on this subject, depending on the nature of enquiries that we receive.

Details of the legislation can be found in [**SI 2014/1275 The Misuse of Drugs and Misuse of Drugs (Safe Custody) (Amendment) (England, Wales and Scotland) Regulations 2014**](http://rpharms.co.uk/EQ-2H26M-3E4T8K-12XZFF-1/c.aspx).

Members requiring further information on this topic, please contact the RPS Support Team on **0845 257 2570** or [**email us**](mailto:support@rpharms.com).

**These changes come into effect on the 10th June 2014.**

The main thing to note is the changes around Tramadol.

Tramadol will need to be written as a Controlled drug on prescriptions requiring:

·         Quantity in Words and figures

·         Dose to be specified on the prescription

·         Maximum of 28 days treatment

·         Cannot be issued on a Repeat prescription RA / RD



**3. NMS Service extended for 2014/15**

It has been confirmed that the community pharmacy New Medicine Service (NMS) will continue to be commissioned by NHS England during the 2014/15 financial year. This is following promising early findings from an evaluation of the service. The long-term future of the service will be dependent on full evaluation findings, currently expected in summer 2014. Pharmacists are reminded that their NMS returns should be submitted to the Area Team quarterly along with the MUR returns (submission form attached). Please see the “Key” tab for further explanation on completion and send this to the generic email address within 10 days of the end of the quarter. If you have any problems please contact the Pharmacy Team – contact details at the end of this newsletter.





**4. Dispensing Catheters -  lessons learned**

Following a recent incident/complaint all pharmacists are reminded to be clear about prescriptions for catheters. Pharmacists will want to check that if a female catheter is ordered, that is what is needed. Some community bowel and bladder services only recommend male catheters for males and females as the female catheters are often too short for most women.  It is highly unlikely that a male would be prescribed a female catheter as occurred recently in Hertfordshire. (unless there was guidance from a Urologist or the bladder and bowel service). Pharmacists are in an ideal position to check that patients are prescribed the correct item. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by community nursing



1. **CPAF returns 2014/15**

NHS England is at present considering the national approach in respect of CPAF returns for 2014/15. Currently we understand there is no requirement for paper CPAF returns whilst an electronic solution is being determined.



**6. Health Promotion Campaigns 2014/15**

The Community Pharmacy Health Promotion Campaigns for 2014/15 are listed below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **2014-2015** |  |  |
| **May - June 14** | **Signposting**  **Focus** | **Obesity & Physical Exercise**  **Poster and leaflets**  Target: All ages. Awareness campaign to promote regular physical exercise to improve health and maintain a healthy weight |
| **July-August 14** | **Signposting**  **Focus** | **Alcohol Awareness**  **Poster and leaflet**  Target: All adults. To increase awareness of recommended drinking levels/alcohol free days, and risks associated with drinking over these levels.  <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/Alcoholhome.aspx> |
| **September - October 14** | **Signposting**  **Focus** | **Seasonal Flu vaccination**  **Poster and leaflets**  Target: All “at risk” adults and children and all those aged over 65. To signpost to appropriate services. Explain and promote the importance of vaccination to individuals. |
| **November 14** | **Signposting**  **Focus** | **Antibiotic Awareness**  **Poster, leaflets and other materials**  Target: All adults. To increase awareness of the effective and correct use of antibiotics. To coincide with European Antibiotics Awareness day. 18th November 2014  Prudent use of antibiotics can help stop resistant bacteria from developing and help keep antibiotics effective for the use of future generations.. |
| **December 14/ January/ February 15** | **Signposting**  **Focus** | **Be Clear on Cancer. National Campaign.**  To feature the current Be Clear on Cancer Campaign (BCoC) as directed by the Dept of Health. |
| **March 2015** | **Signposting focus** | **Smoking Cessation (No Smoking Day March 2015)**  **Poster and leaflets**  Target: Anyone who smokes or wants to know about local services to help quitters either for themselves or family. |

The following data collection sheets have been sent to all pharmacies:

1. An excel copy of the data collection sheet, which should be completed and kept in your pharmacy



1. An excel copy of the annual summary sheet, for completing and forwarding to the Area Team in March 2015 after completion of all the health promotion campaigns.



**The Pharmacy Team Contact Details**

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The pharmacy team works from the Hertfordshire & south Midlands Area Team Headquarters in Welwyn Garden City.

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