Welcome to the November edition of the Medicines Management Newsletter which is distributed to all practices and pharmacies in the Barnsley area. This newsletter aims to keep you informed of the latest medicine updates, drug alerts/recalls and the work currently being completed in GP Practices by the Medicines Management Team. We hope that you find it interesting and informative.

QIPP Programme: Promoting Cost-Effective Prescribing
Practices and pharmacies are asked to report any occasions where patients have been switched to an approved cost-effective brand of medication and the patient has requested to be switched to an alternative brand.
Please contact the Medicines Management Pharmacist or Technician working in your practice who will be happy to contact the patient.

Medication Review Service
Shannon Nickson, Medicines Management Pharmacist from the Medication Review Service attended November’s Practice Managers’ meeting with Chris Lawson to give a presentation on the new service and discuss ways in which the service can work more closely with practices.

The Medication Review Service will be trying to come round to speak to clinicians at the next quarterly practice prescribing meetings, but if you would like a copy of the presentation or if you would like to discuss any of the detail further with your practice, please contact the team on 01226 433664 or email shannon.nickson@nhs.net.

In addition please look out for the special edition of the Medicines Management Newsletter specifically for Care homes which will be available within the next Medicines Management Newsletter.

Novel Oral Anticoagulants – Patient Alert Cards
Patient alert cards should be given to patients prescribed any of the four NOACs: Apixaban, Dabigatran, Rivaroxaban and Edoxaban in line with NICE guidance.

Supplies are available from the Medicines Management Team Office or via the Medicines Management Pharmacist/Technician working in your practice.

If you have any queries regarding medication, please contact the Medicines Management Pharmacist and/or Technician working in your practice or you can contact the Medicines Management Team on 01226 433798

Acupan® brand discontinued - Generic Nefopam available
Meda Pharmaceuticals, the manufacturers of Acupan®, have announced that the brand will be discontinued but will be replaced by a generic version of Nefopam which was launched at the end of October 2015.

Practices are advised to ensure that the drug is prescribed as “Nefopam” to prevent any delays in patients having their prescriptions dispensed.
Please support the European Antibiotic Awareness Day 18th Nov

MHRA Safety Updates
The latest MHRA safety updates are available to view online using the following links:
October 2015 – Volume 9: Issue 3

Key issues affecting Primary Care are highlighted below - For the full details please view the guidance using the links above:
Mirabegron (Betmiga▼): risk of severe hypertension and associated cerebrovascular and cardiac events: Mirabegron is now contraindicated in patients with severe uncontrolled hypertension; advice about regular monitoring is being introduced because of cases of serious hypertension
- contraindicated in patients with severe uncontrolled hypertension (systolic blood pressure ≥180 mm Hg or diastolic blood pressure ≥110 mm Hg, or both)
- Blood pressure should be measured before starting treatment and monitored regularly during treatment, especially in patients with hypertension

The Medicines Management Team is here to help and support
If you require support in identifying patients affected by any of the issues discussed in this newsletter, please speak to the Medicines Management Pharmacist/Technician working in your practice who will be happy to help.

Insulin Glargine: Prescribe as Lantus®/Lantus® Solostar®
The patent for insulin glargine (Lantus®) has expired and a biosimilar brand has been launched, Abasaglar®. The two products have similar actions, but should not be regarded as interchangeable.

Abasaglar® has recently been assigned a provisional red classification by the APC and is currently non-formulary.
Practices should identify patients’ currently prescribed generic insulin glargine and ensure it is changed to be prescribed by its brand name Lantus® or Lantus® Solostar®.

The brand that a patient is using should be included in all communications between the GP and hospital, and included in the patient’s insulin passport.

Disipal® (Orphenadrine) to be discontinued
Astellas Pharma Ltd, the manufacturers of Disipal®, has announced that the brand will be discontinued from the 1st December due to a manufacturing issue. Stock can continued to be ordered up until 30th November

SWYFT recommend patients are reviewed and switched to an alternative antimuscarinic such as procyclidine, benztropine or trihexyphenidyl.

There are liquid orphenadrine products available if the patient has previously tried an alternative antimuscarinic and found it ineffective. MIMS lists Orphenadrine 50mg/5ml oral solution sugar free at £23.00 for 150ml (price correct October 2015).

Camcolit® 250mg Tablets: Change to Name
Essential Pharma has announced that due to commercial reasons the proprietary (brand) name of “Camcolit 250mg tablets” has changed to “Lithium Carbonate Essential Pharma 250mg film-coated tablets”.

Patients prescribed Camcolit 250mg should have their medication records changed to reflect this.
Patients should be reassured that the product strength and formulation have not changed, only the name has changed.
Patients should be advised to update their NHS lithium treatments cards and booklets.

Please note that there are no changes to the product name for Camcolit 400mg.

Updates to Primary Care Antimicrobial Treatment Guidelines
The guidelines have been updated and are available to view using the following link:
Barnsley Primary Care Antimicrobial Guideline 2015

The following updates have been made:
- Treatment recommendations for epididymo-orchitis have been included
- Sinusitis: Doxycycline is now 200mg od on the first day then 100mg od (only to be used in adults).
European Antibiotic Awareness Day 18th November 2015

Antimicrobial resistance is a global public health issue caused by the overuse of antimicrobials and inappropriate prescribing. The number of antibiotic scripts (Items/STARPU) prescribed in Barnsley exceeds the regional and England averages and there is considerable practice level variation.

This year, in addition to European Antibiotic Awareness Day (EAAD) on 18 November there will be the first World Antibiotic Awareness Week (WAAW; 16-20 November 2015), further highlighting the need of global action in tackling antimicrobial resistance.

As part of the Medicines Optimisation scheme 2015-16, practices are asked to reduce antibiotic prescribing (Items/STARPU by 2% or to below the CCG average target) especially broad-spectrum antibiotics (Items/STARPU by 10% or to below the England medium value 11.3%). To support this practices have been required to complete the CCG Medicines Management antibiotic audit pack and implement an action plan.

Practice have also been asked to run an antibiotic patient awareness campaign for at least a one month period to coincide with the EAAD. Promotional posters and patient leaflets should have been distributed to all practices and chemists. If you require any more copies of the posters and leaflets, please contact our team.

You can also find additional promotional materials e.g. videos to be displayed on TVs in patient waiting areas on these websites:

http://www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical-and-research/~//link.aspx?_id=8F6786F93CD24E50ABECC6038EE45C36&_z=z