

## NHS England Guidance: Medicines of Low Value

### Position Statement : Paracetamol and Tramadol Combination Product

#### Summary

All formulations of Paracetamol and Tramadol Combination Product (i.e. Tramacet® combination paracetamol 325mg and tramadol 37.5mg) are **non-formulary** in NHS Waltham Forest CCG.

- New Patients: Prescribers should not initiate Paracetamol and Tramadol combination products for any new patients
- Existing patients: Patients established on paracetamol and tramadol combination products should be reviewed with a view to changing the analgesic to an alternative.
- **There are no patient exceptionalities identified**

**NHS England category: Items which are clinically effective but where more cost-effective products are available, including products that have been subject to excessive price inflation.**

There is no evidence that paracetamol and tramadol combination products are more effective or safer than paracetamol 500mg and codeine 30mg (either as individual drugs or combined as co-codamol 30/500) (1). Paracetamol and tramadol combination product costs substantially more than other drugs which would be considered at the equivalent step of the World Health Organisation (WHO) analgesic ladder (step 2) without evidence of improved efficacy or safety (1). The dose of paracetamol in Tramacet® is not optimal (1). The increased number of reports of misuse and harms associated with tramadol has resulted in an increase in the number of tramadol related deaths (1).

#### Deprescribing advice

- Carry out a review of patients who are prescribed Tramacet® or its generic equivalent with a view to changing to an alternative pain management regime.
- Inform the patient of the reason to switch which includes sub therapeutic doses of paracetamol.
- Assess the patient and use a pain score using the Brief Pain Inventory ([please click here](#)).
- Consider switching to paracetamol 500 mg tablets, at a dose of 1 gram up to four times daily maximum.
- A weak opioid (e.g. codeine phosphate) may be added if paracetamol on its own is not considered effective for the patient. Review this and titrate up if necessary to achieve a similar or improved pain score as Tramacet®.

#### References

1. **PrescQIPP. B62i. Switching Tramacet® to paracetamol alone or paracetamol and codeine 2.1.** s.l. : PrescQIPP, February 2014.