

NEL Prescribing and Medicines Newsletter

October 2025

Updates for Community Pharmacies across North East London

Contents

1.	Discontinuation of Glucagon Pre-Filled Disposable Devices.....	1
2.	Paracetamol in Pregnancy.....	1
3.	MHRA Drug Safety Updates	2
4.	Seasonal Prescribing Restrictions for Oseltamivir (Tamiflu ®) and Zanamivir (Relenza ®)	2
5.	SLS endorsement requirements removed for Tadalafil and Vardenafil.....	3
6.	Importance of adhering to GDPR.....	3
7.	NEL Cow's Milk Protein Allergy (CMPA) Guidelines webinars.....	4
8.	World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week.....	4
9.	PrescQIPP Updates.....	4
10.	Pharmacogenomics in Childhood Asthma.....	5
11.	Contact Details and Additional Resources.....	5

1. Discontinuation of Glucagon Pre-Filled Disposable Devices

As of 30th September 2025, glucagon solution for injection pre-filled disposable devices (**Ogluo®**) used for the treatment of severe hypoglycaemic events in insulin-treated adults and children with diabetes mellitus, has been discontinued.

Prescribers have been advised of the recommended alternative available product which is **GlucaGen® Hypokit**. Should prescribers attempt to prescribe Glucagon solution for injection pre-filled disposable devices, an alert will pop up recommending the alternative.

Please note the following:

- **GlucaGen® HypoKit** is available as a **powder for reconstitution** prior to injection, unlike the discontinued Glucagon product was a ready-to-use pre-filled disposable device.
- Clinicians – including those prescribing or dispensing – should ensure that patients (and/or carers) who are switched to **GlucaGen® HypoKit** are appropriately counselled on:
 - The different formulation and preparation steps
 - The reconstitution process, and
 - The administration technique

For further details and clinical guidance on switching and patient counselling, refer to the Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) information: [here](#) and SmPC [SmPC GlucaGen Hypokit](#) for product information.

2. Paracetamol in Pregnancy

Paracetamol has been confirmed to be safe in pregnancy and is the recommended pain relief option for pregnant women when used as directed. Untreated pain and fever can pose risks to the unborn baby, so it is

important to manage these symptoms with the recommended treatment. Pregnant women should continue to follow existing NHS guidance and speak to their healthcare professional if they have questions about any medication during pregnancy.

For further information, please consult the following:

- [Pregnancy, breastfeeding and fertility while taking paracetamol for adults - NHS](#)
- [MHRA confirms taking paracetamol during pregnancy remains safe and there is no evidence it causes autism in children](#)
- [Paracetamol and pregnancy - reminder that taking paracetamol during pregnancy remains safe - GOV.UK](#)

3. MHRA Latest Drug Safety Updates

Medicine shortages

Antimicrobial Agents Used in Tuberculosis (TB) Treatment

On 23 October 2025 DHSC/NHSE updated the [Medicine Supply Notification for TB antimicrobials](#). The supply situation for antimicrobial medicines used to treat TB has significantly improved. It now supersedes advice in the [National Patient Safety Alert \(NatPSA\)](#) issued on 29 July 2025.

Supplies of rifampicin 150 mg capsules, rifampicin 600 mg IV, and Rifinah® 300 (rifampicin + isoniazid) remain intermittent. Unlicensed rifampicin preparations have been sourced in sufficient quantities to meet gap in supply of licensed packs; however, lead times may vary. Please note allocations will be managed nationally to ensure equitable distribution.

Actions for community pharmacy teams:

- Please disregard advice in the NEL [Guidance-Note-for-TB-med-shortages-Aug-25.pdf](#).
- Please note prescribing of antimicrobials to treat TB in primary care will now resume.
- Please note prescriptions for unlicensed imports will need to be endorsed as a non-Part VIII special and further information can be found [here](#).
- Please refer to the [Medicine Supply Notification \(MSN\)](#) for details.

Specialist Pharmacy Service Medicines Shortages

Please refer to the [SPS Medicines Supply Tool](#) for details of all current medicines shortages (free registration to access).

NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs)

Please note SSPs for **Estradot®** patches and cefalexin oral suspension have been extended. For further details on this and all active SSPs please click [here](#).

Further information on medicines safety

Please consult the following for further information on alerts, recalls, supply issues and medicines safety information [MHRA](#) tab on the Medicines Safety section of the Medicines Optimisation page on the Primary Care Portal.

4. Seasonal Prescribing Restrictions for Oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) and Zanamivir (Relenza®)

Seasonal prescribing restrictions have been removed for **oseltamivir (Tamiflu®)** and **zanamivir (Relenza®)**.

This change will enable primary care prescribers in England to prescribe influenza neuraminidase inhibitor antivirals – oseltamivir and zanamivir – via standard prescription and dispensing routes all year round, and not

just within the period in which the Chief Medical and Pharmaceutical Officers have advised influenza is circulating in the community.

This change is part of a government effort to streamline access to flu treatments, reduce winter pressures on the NHS by allowing outbreaks to be contained, and provide medicines quickly at any time of the year. Prescriptions should be endorsed 'SLS' by the prescriber

Please note [prophylaxis provision](#) remains a commissioned service.

More information available via: [Removal of prescribing restrictions on flu antivirals - Community Pharmacy England](#)

UKHSA guidance will be updated later on this month to reflect the change in policy.

5. SLS Endorsement Requirements Removed for Tadalafil and Vardenafil

SLS endorsement requirements have been removed for generically written prescriptions for **Tadalafil and Vardenafil preparations**.

This change is likely to benefit patients who are unable to tolerate Sildenafil (which is available without restriction for erectile dysfunction) but who currently do not meet the SLS criteria for Tadalafil or Vardenafil.

However, this change does not apply to the branded versions **Cialis®** and **Levitra®** which will still require the SLS endorsement for NHS prescriptions when used for treatment of erectile dysfunction in restricted circumstances

For more information, refer to [SLS endorsement requirements removed for Tadalafil and Vardenafil - Community Pharmacy England](#)

6. Importance of adhering to GDPR

Following a recent data breach, we would like to remind everyone of their responsibility for ensuring personal information is safeguarded and used appropriately. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure they are vigilant in the use of personal data and adhere to **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) principles**. For further reference, see [Data protection: The UK's data protection legislation - GOV.UK](#) and [Privacy Policy – Community Pharmacy NEL](#)

This is particularly important in the transfer of personal information which must comply with information security requirements. Please remember to keep up to date, email lists and distributions, deleting email distribution lists where these become obsolete to avoid confusion and wrong group emails being used.

Should a breach occur, please be reminded to:

- Request all recipients in receipt of the error not to download or forward the message but to “double delete” emails – this is deleting from their Inbox and then deleting from the deleted items folder in Outlook / Other Email software.
- Inform the **CIO (Chief Information Officer)**
- Investigate the breach and circumstances that led to it occurring
- Report the breach on the [LPFSE](#) system
- Report on [DSPT](#) reporting platform **within 72 hours** of the data breach occurring.

7. NEL Cow's Milk Protein Allergy (CMPA) Guidelines webinars

The NEL CMPA working group is holding a webinar to support the practical implementation of the new NEL CMPA guidelines ([see link for guidelines](#))

Part 1 - Date: 5th November 2025 **Time:** 1pm-2pm [Teams Link](#)

Part 2 - Date: 4th December 2025 **Time:** 1pm-2pm [Teams Link](#)

What to expect:

Part 1

- Introduction to the NEL CMPA guidelines, and how to implement these practices.
- How these guidelines support in diagnosing and managing CMPA appropriately.
- Dealing with challenges – including differential diagnoses, addressing inappropriate prescribing.
- A short Q&A to an expert panel including community and hospital dietitians.

Part 2

- Case studies
- Extended Q&A expert panel including community and hospital dietitians

Who Should Attend

- All healthcare professionals involved in the management of CMPA, including community pharmacists.

8. World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week

Tuesday 18th to Monday 24th November 2025

[The World AMR Awareness Week \(WAAW\)](#) is a global campaign to raise awareness and increase understanding of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and to promote global action to tackle the emergence and spread of drug-resistant pathogens. The theme for WAAW 2025 is **"Act Now: Protect Our Present, Secure Our Future."**

The resource toolkit for healthcare professionals is available to download [here](#). **A specific theme has been assigned to each day of the campaign.** Each theme is linked to at least one outcome in the [2024-29 National Action Plan \(NAP\)](#) for AMR.

UKHSA's national campaign for the public: Keep Antibiotics Working (Andi Biotic)

A campaign that aims to increase public awareness and understanding of the correct and incorrect antibiotic behaviours, using the below 3 messages:

1. **Don't take antibiotics for colds and flu**
2. **Don't save antibiotics for later**
3. **Take antibiotics as directed by your healthcare professional.**

Further information on the campaign can be found [here](#).

Please register to attend national (NHSE) online events [here](#).

9. PrescQIPP Updates

Polypharmacy and deprescribing: [PrescQIPP's updated bulletin](#) on polypharmacy and deprescribing considers the evidence base for deprescribing and includes resources that help support safe deprescribing through **shared** decision making and **patient** decision aids.

Updated [PrescQIPP Resources](#) include **Care Home resources to support patients having a Structured Medication Review..** The resources include ‘Safely stopping your medicine’ leaflets (for care home staff, residents and their relatives) which are also available in a number of other languages, audio versions for visually impaired people and easy read versions for people with learning disabilities [here](#).

PrescQIPP – Upcoming Webinars:

Details	When	Time	Registration
Pharmacist Review of Opioid Prescribing in Chronic Pain	4th November 2025	1:00 PM – 2:00 PM GMT	Register here: Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams
Liver disease	5th November 2025	1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Register here: Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams
Sepsis	11th December 2025	1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Register here: Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams

View recordings of previous webinars at <https://www.prescqipp.info/learning/prescribing-mastery-webinars/>

Not registered with PrescQIPP yet? You can register free of charge to access PrescQIPP resources by [clicking here](#). Please select “ICS North East London” as the organisation

10. Pharmacogenomics in Childhood Asthma

NHS Pharmacogenomics and Medicines Optimisation Network of Excellence will be hosting a webinar on *Pharmacogenomics in Childhood Asthma*.

Drawing on insights from the PACT study this webinar will bring together leading voices in paediatrics, respiratory care, and genomics to discuss:

- The current evidence base for pharmacogenomic-guided prescribing in childhood asthma.
- Potential impact on prescribing practice, patient outcomes, and medicines optimisation.
- Opportunities and challenges for national implementation within the NHS.
- The role of national networks, clinicians, and policy leaders in shaping next steps.

Thursday 27th November 2025, 12:15 pm to 1:15 pm

Register here: [Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams](#)

11. Contact Details and Additional Resources

CONTACT DETAILS

NEL ICB Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation Team	Prescribing and medicines enquiries (HCP use only): nelondonicb.prescribingqueries@nhs.net
Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) Medicines Advice	For all patient specific clinical queries please use the following SPS contact: askspnhs@sps.direct
For all enquires, reporting concerns or incidents relating to Controlled Drugs	england.londonaccountableoffice@nhs.net Report CD incidents using the national reporting tool www.cdreporting.co.uk

RESOURCES

For NEL Joint Formulary	https://www.nel-jointformulary.nhs.uk User guide: NEL netFormulary User Guide FINAL .pdf
For Pharmacy & Medicines Optimisation Team Resources	https://primarycare.northeastlondon.icb.nhs.uk/home/meds/
For Medicine Supply Shortages	Click here for SPS Medicines Supply Tool which offers up-to-date information on Medicines Shortages, provided by DHSC and NHSE/I. Register with SPS free-of-charge to access.
For PGD Updates	UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) – click here SPS – click here NHS England (NHSE) – click here
For MHRA information	For all MHRA updates on alerts, recalls and safety information on drugs and medical devices Alerts, recalls and safety information: drugs and medical devices - GOV.UK
Learn from Patient Safety Events Service (LFPSE)	For reporting patient safety incidents and misses NHS England » Learn from patient safety events (LFPSE) service
For Medicines Safety Tools - PrescQIPP	PrescQIPP - Medicines Safety
For reporting suspected adverse effects/defects of medicines or devices – Yellow Card Scheme	Yellow Card Making medicines and medical devices safer

For your information:

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information included in this newsletter is correct at the time of publication. Throughout the newsletter, external links are provided to other sites. These links are provided to improve access to information and exist only for the convenience of readers of the newsletter; NEL ICB Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation Team cannot accept responsibility for their content. We cannot guarantee that these links will work all of the time and we have no control over the availability of the linked pages. This newsletter is not to be used for commercial purposes.