

Spectrum Drug and Alcohol Service Hertfordshire

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Dear Pharmacists,

Re: Espranor (buprenorphine oral lyophilisate) 2mg and 8mg

During an investigation of a recent error it came to light that a pharmacist dispensed generic buprenorphine against a prescription for **Espranor Oral lyophilisate (2mg oral lyophilisate & 8mg oral lyophilisate), 18mgs daily supervised.**

The matter was reported to us at a medical review two weeks after the service user was commenced on this medication. During the investigation the pharmacist confirmed this to have taken place. It is understood that the service user continued to receive generic buprenorphine instead of Espranor for a period of twelve days.

Cgl Spectrum would like to remind all pharmacists that Espranor **is not** interchangeable with generic buprenorphine sublingual tablets at the same dose (a "like for like" switch) as there are bioavailability differences between the formulations. There is also a difference in the way Espranor is administered, with the Espranor oral lyophilisate being placed directly on the tongue, rather than under the tongue.

As you have already been informed, Cgl are reviewing service users taking buprenorphine and where appropriate changing them over to Espranor. Prescribers will use their professional judgement regarding a suitable dose when making the transition. We will always prescribe Espranor by brand to reduce the chance of dispensing errors and to ensure our service users consistently receive the same brand of medication.

More information about Espranor can be obtained from www.medicines.org.uk where the Summary of Product Characteristics and Patient Information Leaflet can be found. Cgl Spectrum are happy to support pharmacists with any queries they may have regarding the use of Espranor or any other medication by our service users.

And finally, if you have not already done so, please inform us if you have been involved in any incidents involving Espranor / Buprenorphine in the usual way by reporting directly to us and in your normal CD reporting processes.

Yours sincerely,

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