

### Pregabalin and gabapentin to be controlled drugs

From 1st April 2019, pregabalin and gabapentin will be classified as Schedule 3 Controlled Drugs (CDs).

Community pharmacy teams should note that whilst pregabalin and gabapentin will be subject to the usual prescription writing requirements for Schedule 3 CDs, they will be exempt from the safe custody regulations. This means that pharmacies will not be required to keep these drugs in their CD cabinet.

This follows representations from PSNC and others that the usual storage arrangements for Schedule 3 CDs would not be practical for pharmacies to comply with considering the significant number of prescriptions for these drugs.

### Experiencing supply issues?

Pharmacy teams who experience problems in obtaining medicines (generic or branded) or appliances are reminded to feed this back to the PSNC Dispensing and Supply Team.

PSNC reports the feedback received to the Department of Health and Social Care to support their monitoring of the situation. It is also used in discussions with manufacturers, for example, highlighting problems with contingency arrangements.

Please report using our online feedback forms:  
[psnc.org.uk/feedback](http://psnc.org.uk/feedback)

### Use of antiviral medicines against influenza

Due to increasing flu levels in the community, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has advised that the prescribing of antiviral medicines for the prophylaxis and treatment of flu at NHS expense is now permitted.

Community pharmacy teams are reminded that prescriptions for oseltamivir (Tamiflu) or zanamivir (Relenza) must be endorsed 'SLS' by the prescriber.

## Book now for our Prescription charge exemptions and switching webinar

Latest PSNC and NHS BSA webinar will guide viewers through the exemption declaration process and explain how prescription switching can affect pharmacy payments.

**“We will outline the different exemptions and give you tips to prevent switching.”**



PSNC and the NHS Business Services Authority (NHS BSA) will be holding a 'Prescription charge exemptions and switching' webinar on **Tuesday 22nd January at 7.30pm**.

Are you interested in learning about:

- How to determine a patient's eligibility for exemption from the NHS prescription charge?
- How to ensure that the backs of prescription forms and EPS tokens are completed correctly?
- Tips on how to avoid prescriptions being switched from exempt to chargeable (and vice versa)?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, sign up to our webinar where Suraj Shah and Mitesh Bhudia, from PSNC's Dispensing and Supply Team, and Alison O'Brien, from the NHS BSA, will provide the answers. During the 60-minute webinar, there will also be an opportunity for viewers to ask their own questions.

Exemptions from the prescription charge is consistently one of our most popular webpages and, to complement NHS BSA's recent Check Before You Tick campaign, PSNC is keen to help make sure that community pharmacy contractors and their teams are fully equipped to discuss exemptions with patients as well as recognising the importance of filing prescriptions into the 'paid' and 'exempt' bundles correctly for processing and payment.

On the night the presenters will outline the different exemptions from the prescription charge, including the evidence needed to prove eligibility, and how the declaration process varies between paper and electronic prescriptions.

This will be followed by details of why prescriptions are switched and how this affects pharmacy payments, as well as providing top tips on how to make sure switching isn't a problem in your pharmacy.

### Join us for the webinar

Book your place now: [psnc.org.uk/webinar](http://psnc.org.uk/webinar). Even if you are unable to attend the webinar live, it is still worth registering for the event so that you will be sent a link to the recorded version of the webinar as soon as it becomes available.

You may wish to read *Dispensing Factsheet: Prescription Switching* in advance of the webinar, which can be found at: [psnc.org.uk/witchingfactsheet](http://psnc.org.uk/witchingfactsheet)

## Ask PSNC: Price concessions special

The PSNC Dispensing and Supply Team answers the most commonly asked questions about the price concession system.



**Q. Why isn't the full list of price concessions released earlier each month?**

**A.** PSNC is required to make a fresh application for price concessions at the start of each month. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) then takes time to undertake their own checks to reach a proposal. The price concession updates are announced as soon as they are agreed.

In some cases, there is a need for ongoing negotiation between PSNC and DHSC, particularly on drugs where we are far apart on prices; this can take time. The final monthly update is often released late in the month as these include new drug applications submitted mid-month and any drugs where PSNC and DHSC have been unable to agree, resulting in imposed prices.

PSNC would like to see changes to the arrangements that would allow community pharmacy contractors to have certainty over what they will be reimbursed, much earlier in the month; but this must be balanced with the need to negotiate with DHSC where PSNC feels the offered price is not sufficient.

**Q. Can you tell me where the drug is available to purchase at the stated concessionary price?**

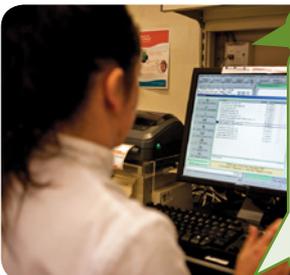
**A.** Unfortunately, competition law prevents us from directing pharmacies to purchase drugs from a specific wholesaler or manufacturer.

We do often see prices for drugs vary quite significantly between different mainline wholesalers and also via short-line wholesalers, and therefore we advise contractors to check with multiple suppliers before ordering to make sure they are purchasing at the best possible price.

**Q. If a price concession is granted in one month and is still a problem in the next month, why doesn't the price just roll over?**

**A.** Price concessions only apply for the month in which they are granted. Because the market fluctuates on a regular basis in terms of stock levels and prices it would not be appropriate to roll the price over from one month to the next.

PSNC regularly monitors the market through contractor reports and communications with wholesalers. As stock levels and prices can vary across the country, we rely on contractor reports to help feed into our market surveillance and our discussions with DHSC. It is also important to note that the DHSC may not act on something unless contractors have reported it.



**Q. Why does the price concession for a drug not reflect the price I'm having to purchase it at?**

**A.** PSNC and DHSC negotiate price concessions and try to agree on a price that both parties feel is reflective of the market. Whilst this may not be the price that you have purchased at, PSNC only agrees when we believe that the price is one that most contractors can obtain the drug for.

However, there are also times when an agreement cannot be reached and DHSC decides to impose a price concession instead. The decision to grant a concession ultimately lies with DHSC so they have the power to impose a price if they feel unable to agree to PSNC's requested prices.



**Q. How do I report supply issues to PSNC?**

**A.** Please get in touch with us to report any supply issues by using the online reporting form at [psnc.org.uk/genericreport](https://psnc.org.uk/genericreport). Alternatively, you can report any concerns about drug availability at Drug Tariff-listed prices by contacting us via telephone on 0203 1220 810 or by emailing [info@psnc.org.uk](mailto:info@psnc.org.uk).

You can email in copies of wholesaler invoices as evidence to [medicines.shortages@psnc.org.uk](mailto:medicines.shortages@psnc.org.uk) or fax 0207 278 1127.

Look out for more frequently asked questions next month...

If you would like more information on any of the topics covered, the team at PSNC will be happy to help (0203 1220 810 or e-mail [info@psnc.org.uk](mailto:info@psnc.org.uk)).

# Drug Tariff Watch: February 2019

## Part VIIIA additions

- Bupivacaine 25mg/10ml (0.25%) / Adrenaline (base) 50micrograms/10ml (1 in 200,000) solution for injection ampoules (10) – *Advanz Pharma*
- Bupivacaine 50mg/10ml (0.5%) / Adrenaline (base) 50micrograms/10ml (1 in 200,000) solution for injection ampoules (10) – *Advanz Pharma*
- Buprenorphine 16mg / Naloxone 4mg sublingual tablets sugar free (28) - *Suboxone*
- Buprenorphine 2mg oral lyophilisates sugar free (7) - *Espranor*
- Buprenorphine 8mg oral lyophilisates sugar free (7) - *Espranor*
- Dolutegravir 10mg tablets (30) - *Tivicay*
- Dolutegravir 25mg tablets (30) - *Tivicay*
- Dolutegravir 50mg tablets (30) - *Tivicay*
- Fentanyl 37.5microgram/hour transdermal patches (5) - *Mezolar Matrix*
- Fidaxomicin 200mg tablets (20) - *Dificlir*
- Hepatitis A GMB strain (adsorbed) / Typhoid polysaccharide vaccine suspension for injection 1ml pre-filled syringes ■ (1) - *ViATIM*
- Hepatitis A vaccine (inactivated, adsorbed) suspension for injection 1ml pre-filled syringes ■ (1) - *Havrix Monodose*
- Hypromellose 0.32% eye drops 0.5ml unit dose preservative free (30) - *Artelac Single Dose Unit*
- Ingenol mebutate 150micrograms/g gel (1.41g (3x ■ 0.47g)) - *Picato*
- Ingenol mebutate 500micrograms/g gel (0.94g (2x ■ 0.47g)) - *Picato*
- Insulin isophane biphasic human 25/75 100units/ml suspension for injection 3ml pre-filled disposable devices (5) - *Insuman Comb 25 SoloStar*
- Insulin isophane biphasic human 30/70 100units/ml suspension for injection 10ml vials ■ (1) - *Humulin M3*
- Insulin lispro 200units/ml solution for injection 3ml pre-filled disposable devices:
  - o (5) - *Humalog KwikPen*
- Levocarnitine 1g/10ml oral solution unit dose vials sugar free (10) - *Carnitor*
- Levonorgestrel 19.5mg intrauterine device ■ (1) - *Kyleena*
- Medroxyprogesterone 104mg/0.65ml suspension for injection pre-filled disposable devices ■ (1) - *Sayana Press*
- \*Mesalazine 500mg suppositories (30) - *Salofalk*
- Phytomenadione 2mg/0.2ml solution for injection ampoules (5):
  - o - *Konakion MM Paediatric*
- Rifampicin 100mg/5ml oral suspension (120ml) - *Rifadin*
- Ticagrelor 90mg orodispersible tablets sugar free (56) - *Brilique*
- Tobramycin 28mg inhalation powder capsules with device ■ (224) - *Tobi Podhaler*
- Tramadol 100mg/2ml solution for injection ampoules (5) - *Zydol*

## KEY:

- Special container
- Item requiring reconstitution
- \* This pack only (others already available)

- Water for injections 10ml vials (25) - *Hameln Pharmaceuticals Ltd*
- Water for injections 20ml ampoules (20) - *Water for injections Mini-Plasco*

## Part VIIIA deletions

- Dexibuprofen 400mg tablets (60) - *Seractil*
- Diamorphine 500mg powder for solution for injection vials (5) - *Teva UK Ltd*
- Diltiazem 60mg modified-release capsules (56) - *Dilzem SR 60*
- Erythromycin 250mg gastro-resistant capsules (28) - *Erymax*
- Hypromellose 1% eye drops (10ml) - *Isopto Alkaline*
- \*Mesalazine 500mg suppositories (10) - *Asacol*
- Miconazole 1.2g vaginal capsules (1) - *Gyno-Daktarin*
- Pergolide 1mg tablets (100)
- Pergolide 250microgram tablets (100)
- Pindolol 10mg / Clopamide 5mg tablets (28) - *Viskaldix*
- Timolol 0.5% eye drops 0.2ml unit dose preservative free (30) - *Timoptol*

For a full list of the upcoming Drug Tariff changes, please visit: [ow.ly/MEVg30ngds0](http://ow.ly/MEVg30ngds0)

## Part IX deletions

Product	Size, Type, Product Code
Flivasorb dressing	Square and Rectangular (all sizes)
Venturi wound sealing kit	Channel Drain
Silk Garments - Baby Grow	Premature
Provox HME Stomafilter with Regular Plus adhesive	7330
Provox HME Stomafilter with regular adhesive	Oval (7252) and Round (7251)
Tracheostomy Cleaning Devices - Hei-Clean brush	All sizes
Tracheostomy Cleaning Devices - Hei-Clean Soft brush	All sizes
DEODERANTS - Independence Odour Eliminator Lemon & Lime Pump Spray	59ml (PR310)
ILEOSTOMY (DRAINABLE) BAGS - Impression with Convex wafer - Transparent	19mm (3610), 25mm (3612), 44mm (3618)
ILEOSTOMY (DRAINABLE) BAGS - Premium - Transparent	25mm (3662)
TWO PIECE OSTOMY SYSTEMS - Esteem Synergy - Drainable Pouch with InvisiClose outlet and Filter - Opaque - Standard - Right (30.8cm)	13-35mm barrier (S1210F)
TWO PIECE OSTOMY SYSTEMS - Conform - Drainable Pouch - Transparent	55mm (25600)

## AMCo name change

Contractors should note the manufacturer name change of AMCo to Advanz Pharma from the January 2019 Drug Tariff onwards.