

Cost Effective Prescribing Tips for Adult Wards - Version 12

1. When initiating long acting antipsychotic Injections make sure the lowest effective dose is used. Paliperidone initiation usually involves a loading dose of 150mg followed by a 100mg dose the following week before moving to the long-term maintenance dose. The manufacturers' recommended maintenance dose is 75mg yet many patients stay on 100mg. **The annual difference between a 75mg monthly dose and a 100mg dose is approximately £830 per annum.**
2. Consider reducing higher doses of long-acting antipsychotic injections if patients are doing well. A dose of paliperidone injection reduced from 100mg to 50mg would save £830 per annum. If compliance is no longer an issue, consider moving to oral medication.
3. Currently the price paid in the community for a generic quetiapine 300mg plain (IR) tablet is 6p and a 300mg XL tablet is £2.83 despite generic quetiapine XL being available (Drug Tariff, January 2020), **a 47 fold increase in price.** This is an indication that generic XL prices will remain significantly higher than the immediate release preparations.
 - Therefore when initiating quetiapine:
 - i. Only use XL tablets for the **initiation/titration.**
 - ii. Use immediate release (IR) tablets thereafter, once* or twice daily.
 - iii. Only use XL tablets long-term after trying IR tablets first.
 - iv. Add the letters IR after quetiapine to make sure you do not get XL if prescribing it once a day.

*Best given in the evening so that the drowsiness effect wears off through the night.

4. If liquids or orodispersible tablets are needed during the acute illness phase to ensure adherence to treatment, transfer to plain tablets or capsules as soon as possible once the acute phase is over. Avoid using liquid and orodispersible medicines unless absolutely essential as they are usually more expensive. Many people think they cannot swallow tablets and capsules because they have a bad technique. A leaflet to help patients swallow is now available at the link:
www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/node/1680/attachment

For example, indications are that the FP10 price of generic olanzapine orodispersible will remain higher than plain generic tablets. Currently the prices at time of publication are for a single dose:

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| • Olanzapine plain 10mg tablet | 5p |
| • Olanzapine orodispersible sugar free 10mg tablet | 41p |
| • Olanzapine orodispersible 10mg tablet | 173p |
| • Olanzapine 10mg velotab (Zyprexa brand)
(Drug Tariff, January 2020). | 468p |

Please restrict orodispersible use to where it is clinically essential and then prescribe orodispersible sugar free tablets. **Do not prescribe olanzapine orodispersible generically as olanzapine Velotab[®]** as these cost £4.68 per 10mg tablet.

Prior to discharge review the use of orodispersible products as they may have only be needed temporarily.

Please share this information with your junior medical staff.