



Traffic Light System classification – Blue

Drug Name: LICENSED MEDICATIONS FOR ADHD

(Atomoxetine, dexamfetamine, guanfacine, lisdexamfetamine and methylphenidate)

INDICATION/S COVERED: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in Children

Blue: Drugs that are considered suitable for prescribing in primary care, following initiation by a specialist as monitoring and skills required for prescribing are deemed less complex, there is more widespread experience of prescribing in primary care and GPs or Primary Care Prescribers are generally happy to prescribe on specialist advice without the need for formal shared care. A minimum of one months' supply of medication should be prescribed by the initiating consultant, even if prescribing responsibility is transferred earlier than this. A GP or Primary Care Prescriber must be familiar with the prescribing responsibilities and where a GP or Primary Care Prescriber has no experience of prescribing then adequate additional information should be provided by the initiating specialist. This information sheet should be sent to the GP or Primary Care Prescriber with the clinic letter.

RESPONSIBILITIES and ROLES

Consultant / Specialist responsibilities
1. Confirmation of diagnosis and identification of suitable patients following full assessment
2. Initiation of appropriate therapy, and once stable request agreement of shared care with primary care prescriber
3. Discussion of risks and benefits with patients, outline possible side effects and explain their roles
4. To undertake a complete history, documenting: concomitant medicines; past and present medical and psychiatric disorders or symptoms; family history of sudden cardiac death, unexplained death, or malignant arrhythmia
5. To undertake a physical examination for the presence of heart disease.
6. To assess baseline cardiovascular status, including blood pressure and heart rate before prescribing and get specialist cardiac advice if appropriate.
7. Issuing initial prescription(s) until the patient is stabilised (minimum of one month) on treatment
8. To provide a copy of this information sheet to the patient to ensure that they are familiar with all roles and responsibilities
9. To review the patient and monitor the following (if relevant to specific drug) usually on a six monthly basis (though well established adolescents may be seen annually. A move to annual monitoring must be communicated to the primary care prescriber), act on the results appropriately and communicate these results to the primary care prescriber: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Height, weight and appetite, recorded at baseline, following dosage changes & 6 monthly. Recorded on a growth centile chart. • Blood pressure and pulse, recorded at baseline, following dosage adjustments and 6 monthly. Record on a centile chart. • Blood and platelet counts at discretion of supervising clinician(s) (e.g. if recurrent nose bleeds, bruising or infections occur. Baseline, then when clinically indicated. • If clinically indicated, liver function tests, particularly if prescribing atomoxetine. • As stimulant medications are controlled drugs, the specialist or parents should inform the school concerning any medication for these indications. In order to assess the effects of the drug on the child's emotional, physical or behavioural states the specialist should request further information from the school about the child's behaviour. • To refer patients who develop symptoms such as palpitations, exertional chest pain, unexplained syncope, dyspnoea, or other symptoms suggestive of heart disease for prompt specialist cardiac evaluation. • The development of new or worsening of pre-existing, psychiatric symptoms (also following dose adjustments and at every visit).
10. For guanfacine only: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parents/carers and patients must be reminded to report missing more than one consecutive dose to the prescriber. In the event of more than one consecutive dose being missed, re-titration is recommended b. During the first year of treatment a patient should be assessed at least every 3 months for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs and symptoms of somnolence & sedation, hypotension and bradycardia • Weight increase/risk of obesity
11. Notify the GP of the patient's failure to attend for clinical review or drug monitoring and give advice on stopping the medication.
12. When stimulant medication is being used, to look out for signs of diversion (transfer of the medicine from the individual for whom it was prescribed to one for whom it is not prescribed), misuse, and abuse.
13. If prescribing M/R methylphenidate this must be by 'Brand' to avoid the risk of the wrong formulation being dispensed.
14. Ensure that all newly treated patients (and/or their carers) receive appropriate education and advice regarding their drug therapy and shared care arrangements. This should include written information where appropriate
15. Providing primary care prescriber with clinic letter stating planned introduction and reviews and additional advice if appropriate
16. Provide outpatient reviews, monitor effectiveness/side effects
17. To liaise and advise primary care prescriber to interrupt treatment at least annually to assess ongoing need.
18. To take responsibility for stopping the drug and organizing medication breaks.

General Practitioner (GP) or Primary Care Prescriber responsibilities

1. Subsequent prescribing of at the dose recommended.
2. To inform the consultant if unwilling to enter into shared-care arrangements at the time of initial referral.
3. To provide repeat prescriptions of the ADHD medication at the dose recommended and the patient is stabilised (not before initial one month stabilisation period). A demonstrable system should be in place to ensure that prescribing is reviewed by the primary care prescriber if there is no record of the fact that monitoring has taken place within the agreed time scales. Prescriptions for stimulants should be restricted to a 30 day supply and are only valid for 28 days from the date of signature, as stimulant medications are controlled drugs subject to safe custody and specific regulations for prescribing.
4. To record any changes in therapy in the prescribing record on receipt of such communication from secondary care and to act upon these.
5. To monitor prescribing rate of ADHD medications for individual patients. Additional requests for stimulants may indicate abuse or diversion. Some patients may only be taking stimulants on days when at school/college so may not be collecting monthly scripts. Both atomoxetine and guanfacine however need to be taken continuously and pick up of less than monthly may indicate non-adherence. Any concerns should be discussed with the specialist.
6. To contact consultant / specialist if deterioration in behaviour.
7. To report adverse drug reactions or interactions to consultant / specialist.
8. To refer patients who develop symptoms such as palpitations, exertional chest pain, unexplained syncope, dyspnoea, or other symptoms suggestive of heart disease for prompt specialist cardiac evaluation.
9. To monitor patients overall health and well-being.
10. Liaise with consultant / specialist if any cause for concern or drug discontinued.
11. If prescribing modified release methylphenidate this must be by 'Brand' to avoid the risk of the wrong formulation being dispensed.

Patient / Carer role

1. Ask the consultant / specialist or GP or Primary Care Prescriber for information, if he or she does not have a clear understanding of the treatment.
2. Share any concerns in relation to treatment with any medication covered by this agreement
3. Tell the consultant / specialist or primary care prescriber of any other medication being taken, including over-the-counter products.
4. Inform the specialist of more than one consecutive missed dose by patient, for those patients taking guanfacine.
5. Read the patient information leaflet included with your medication and report any side effects or concerns you have to the consultant / specialist or primary care prescriber.
6. To attend appointments.
7. Arrange blood tests as per consultant / specialist request
8. To be aware of side effects and report to their consultant / specialist or primary care prescriber any relevant symptoms such as: palpitations, exertional chest pain, unexplained fainting, shortness of breath, development of new or worsening of pre-existing psychiatric symptoms.

BACK-UP ADVICE and SUPPORT

	Telephone No.	Email address:
Specialist:		
Brighton CAMHs	01273 718680	N/A
Mid Sussex CAMHs	01444 472670	N/A
Crawley/Horsham CAMHs	01403 223200	N/A
Wealden CAMHs	01825 745001	N/A
Hospital Pharmacy: Worthing Hospital	01903 205 111, ext 8547	pharmacy@wsht.nhs.uk
Other:		
(Out of hours): On call physicians	N/A	N/A

This information sheet does not replace the SPCs, which should be read in conjunction with this guidance. Prescribers should also refer to the appropriate paragraph in the current edition of the BNF. The GP or Primary Care Prescriber has the right to refuse to agree to shared care, in such an event the total clinical responsibility will remain with the consultant / specialist.