

Monthly Prescribing Recommendation September 2014

Yasmin

Your CCG supported the principle of asking GP practices to focus on monthly prescribing topics to deliver further prescribing cost efficiencies. Prescribing is a major contributor to the CCG's overall QIPP plan and the realistic ambition of financial balance. Achieving the latter is essential to qualify for the quality premium payment that can bring significant financial benefits to the CCG, and allow re-investment in primary care in subsequent years. Practices, therefore, are being asked to complete the relative actions before the end of the stated period.

Over the month of September, we ask that practices review their prescribing of Yasmin following the recommendations below:

Background

Yasmin has similar contraceptive efficacy and cycle control to other combined oral contraceptives (COCs). However, contrary to initial claims by the manufacturer, there is no compelling evidence that its effects on skin, premenstrual symptoms, and feelings of well-being are any different to standard COCs. A clinically important effect on weight gain has not been demonstrated¹.

Yasmin costs significantly more than other COCs (£14.70 per 63). It offers no proven advantages to warrant the increased cost¹. A recent review by the Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) reached the same conclusion². The annual spend from June 13 – May 14 in HRW CCG on Yasmin was £39,969. This accounts for 15% of items for COCs and 39% of costs.

Recommendations

Due to the lack of evidence the CCG recommends that Yasmin is only prescribed as a third line option for women with acne, which has not settled following the use of two more cost-effective COC pills.

It is anticipated that the total prescribing of this COC (as Yasmin, equivalent brands or generic) will reduce. But considerable further savings can be made across the CCG if patients requiring Yasmin are switched to **Lucette** (Consilient). If 100% of current Yasmin (branded or generic) prescribing was switched to Lucette an estimated £14K per annum would be saved across the CCG. The total savings will be greater if alternative lower cost COCs are used. Figure 1 overleaf shows the weighted cost of Yasmin per practice.

Lucette has the same constituents as Yasmin but is significantly cheaper at £9.35 per 3 cycle pack compared to £14.70. Yasmin's patent has expired therefore it is possible the drug tariff price for the generic combination may fall as other low cost brands become available. Lucette is one option for lower cost prescribing of a COC containing 0.030 mg ethinylestradiol and 3 mg drospirenone.

Full prescribing details can be found at: Lucette <http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/28559>
Yasmin <http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/8777>

Action

- **Practices are asked to ensure Yasmin prescribing** (or equivalent brand/generic) **is appropriate**
- **Patients continuing this COC should be switched to Lucette** (or equivalent low cost brand)

Communications to all GPs and nurses in each practice will be the key to the successful implementation of this measure. Please ensure that if patients are switched to Lucette they understand that they are maintained on the same contraceptive although a different brand. Please also notify your local pharmacies in advance to enable effective management of stocks. HRW versions of SystmOne and EMIS formularies will be amended to incorporate this recommendation.

Should you wish prescribing support from our team, please do not hesitate to ask. Should you have any queries, recommendations or ideas about these or future initiatives then we would be pleased to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

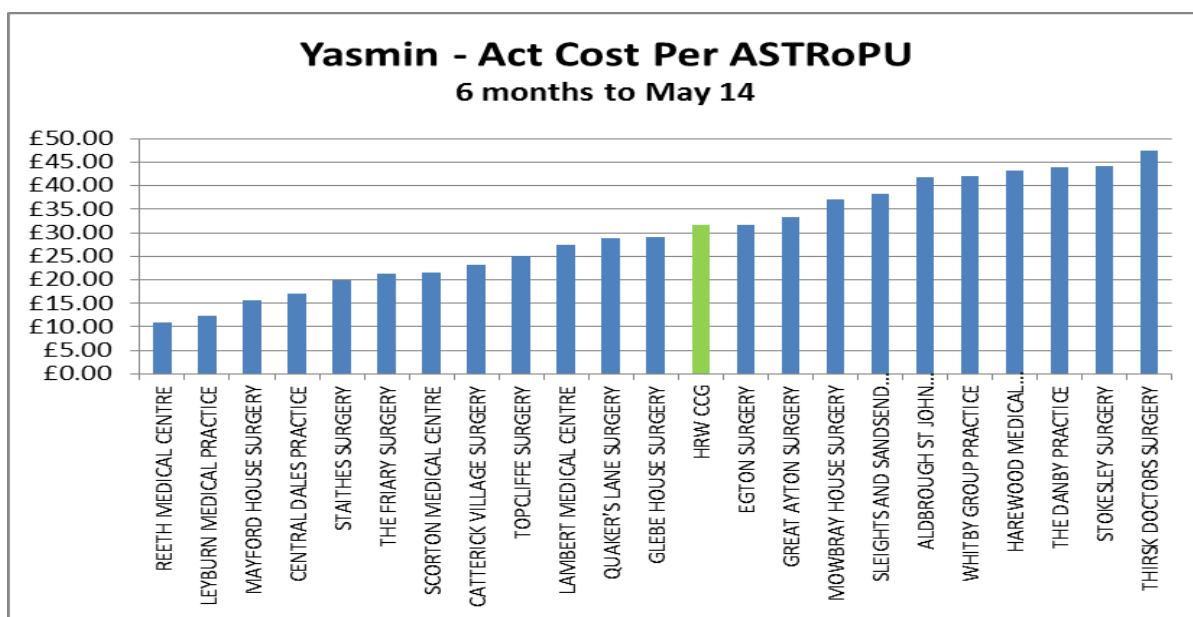
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References

- <http://www.ukmi.nhs.uk/NewMaterial/html/docs/Yasmin0503.pdf>
- http://www.scottishmedicines.org.uk/files/advice/Yasmin_RESUBMISSION_FINAL_MARCH_2011_for_website.pdf



Update

In September 2013 the CCG asked practices to review patients on Cerazette and to switch to Cerelle or generic desogestrel where appropriate. Figure 2 shows the significant progress made on this topic.

