

Monthly Prescribing Recommendation January 2016

Topical Ibuprofen 5% and 10% gel

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. Please note that the prescribing incentive scheme for 2015/16 awards for "agreement to and active change in prescribing as a result of the circulation of monthly prescribing topics to GP practices".

During January, we ask that practices review their branded and generic prescribing of topical ibuprofen 5% and 10% gel and switch to a low cost brand such as Fenbid 5% or Fenbid Forte 10% gel in 100g pack size where appropriate.

Background

Generic prescribing is recognised as a sign of good practice as well as generally being more cost effective. However there is a small number of medications where there are substantial cost differences and numerous different brands ranging considerably in price.

Generic ibuprofen 5% and 10% gel preparations and brands such as Ibuleve are more expensive than their branded generic equivalent Fenbid. All ibuprofen gels are licensed for use in backache, sprains and strains, muscular pain, neuralgia and mild rheumatic conditions.

Fenbid® 5% gel and Fenbid® Forte 10% gel give the same cooling and soothing effect as other ibuprofen gels available and are more cost effective when prescribed as the 100g pack size. It is recommended that all patients where appropriate are changed over to Fenbid® or Fenbid Forte® where possible. Treatment with ibuprofen gel should be reviewed by the prescriber 14 days after initiation to ensure continuation of treatment is appropriate and effective. (Fenbid®/Fenbid Forte® Summary of Product Characteristics)

The table below shows the NHS price variations:

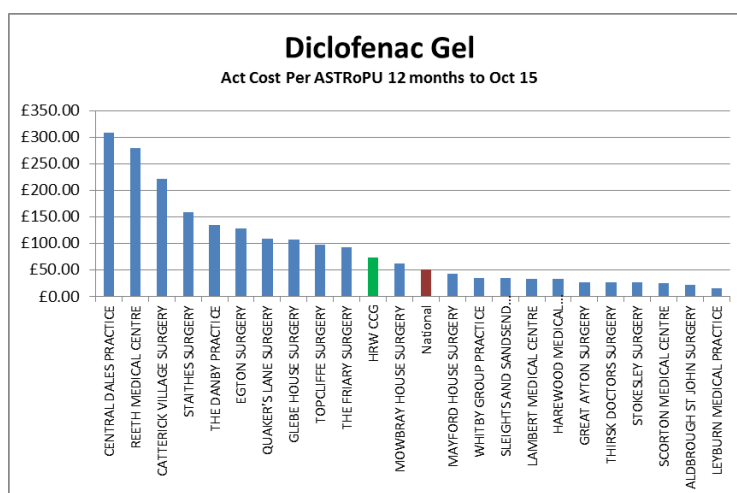
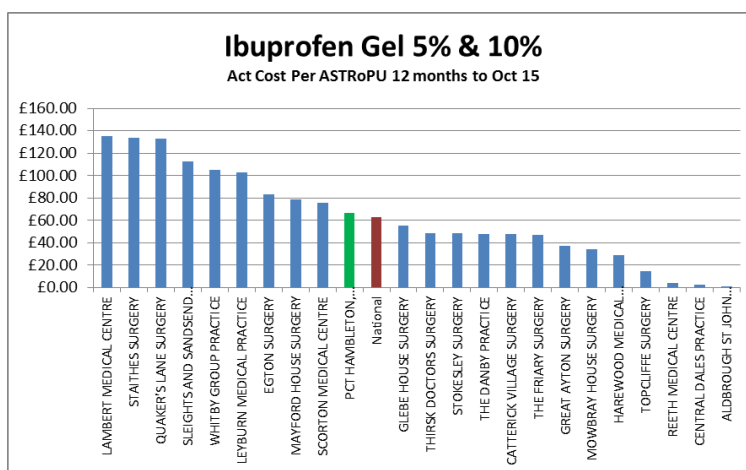
Preparation	Price per 30g	Price per 50g	Price per 100g
Generic Ibuprofen 5% gel	-	2.31	4.62
Generic Ibuprofen 10% gel	-	-	4.92
Ibuleve 5% gel	2.64	3.70	6.80
Ibuleve 10% gel	3.39	4.63	-
Fenbid 5% gel	2.10	2.65	1.50
Fenbid Forte 10% gel	2.65	-	4.00
Diclofenac 1.16% gel (Voltarol Emulgel)			£5.63

In the 12 months to October 2015 the spend in HRW CCG on topical ibuprofen 5% and 10% (branded and generic prescriptions) was over £40,000. The potential annual savings in HRW CCG from a 100% switch to Fenbid is over £16,000. The majority of prescribing in HRW CCG is as the generic gel and so most of the savings will come from switching these patients.

In the 12 months to October 2015 the spend in HRW CCG on topical diclofenac gel was £44,000. A review of these patients may highlight patients who are no longer gaining benefit from the gel or are no longer using in which case it could be stopped.

Recommendations

- **Practices are asked to review their prescribing of topical ibuprofen 5% and 10% gel and switch to Fenbid or Fenbid Forte 100g pack size where appropriate.**
 - Please note that the most cost effective pack size for Fenbid is 100g so patients should be switched to this size and advised of the need to order less frequently.
 - The prescribing support team are available to help practices implement this change and a protocol for the switch to Fenbid 5% and 10%, including a sample patient letter, is available.
- **Practices are asked to review patients currently prescribed topical diclofenac gel and stop in patients where it is no longer effective or no longer used.**



HRW versions of SystmOne and EMIS formularies will be amended to incorporate this recommendation.

Local community pharmacies have been e-mailed to inform them that practices will be undertaking this switch. As the timings of the switch will vary among practices it is advisable to notify local pharmacies in advance of the switch to enable effective management of stock.

The most up to date source of prescribing data is via the Electronic medicines Compendium:

Fenbid 5% Gel <http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/23666>

Fenbid Forte 10% Gel <http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/23665>

Should you have any queries, recommendations or ideas about these or future initiatives then we would be pleased to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Mark Duggleby
CCG Prescribing Lead

Ken Latta
Strategic Lead Pharmacist

Helen Wilkins
Senior Pharmacist