



## Information for Patients about Medicines containing Glatiramer Acetate

**February 2021**

Glatiramer acetate is a medicine used in the treatment of relapsing remitting forms of multiple sclerosis. There are now a number of products available that contain glatiramer acetate.

### What is the preferred product for glatiramer acetate?

The preferred product identified by the HSE for glatiramer acetate is Brabio®. It has been tested to show that it is just as safe and effective as the original medicine Copaxone®.

### What's changing?

From **February 2021**, we are changing the way medicines containing glatiramer acetate are prescribed under the HSE's High Tech Arrangement.

### I am a new patient, what do the changes mean for me?

- From **1 February 2021**, if you are starting treatment on glatiramer acetate, you will be prescribed the preferred product Brabio®.

### What's the definition of a new patient?

A new patient, is an adult, who has not been prescribed or received glatiramer acetate within the last six months.

### I am an existing patient prescribed glatiramer acetate, what does the change mean for me?

- If you are an existing patient, you will continue to receive your medicine from your community pharmacy. The changes outlined above do not apply to you.

If you are currently on Copaxone®, your consultant or a member of their team may discuss with you the possibility of switching to Brabio®.

### **Does my consultant know about these changes?**

Yes. Consultants in neurology are aware of these changes.

### **Why have the changes been introduced?**

The preferred product costs less than the original medicine. Switching patients to it will save the HSE money. This means we can give new innovative medicines to even more patients.

### **What supports are available?**

Supports for patients prescribed this medicine include:

- home nurse visit to provide training on administering the injection
- supply of sharps bins and waste collection service
- access to patient support telephone line
- provision of product information

Your consultant or a member of their team will register you for these services.

### **Where can I get more information on the preferred product?**

Further information for patients is available on the following websites:

**HSE-Medicines Management Programme:** <https://www.hse.ie/yourmedicines> under Best-value medicines

**MS Ireland:** <https://www.ms-society.ie/media/104>