Re: Reimbursement of liraglutide (Saxenda®) 6 mg/ml solution for injection in pre-filled pen

3rd January 2023

Dear Colleagues,

Liraglutide (Saxenda®) 6 mg/ml solution for injection in pre-filled pen is available for reimbursement under the Community Drug Schemes (CDS), specifically the Drugs Payment (DP) and General Medical Services (GMS) schemes from 1st January 2023. Reimbursement of liraglutide (Saxenda®) is conditional on a managed access protocol (MAP) being in place through the HSE-Medicines Management Programme (MMP) for a defined subgroup of the licensed population, which is:

"***Adult patients, as an adjunct to a reduced-calorie diet and increased physical activity for weight management, with an initial body mass index of ≥ 35 kg/m² with prediabetes and high-risk of cardiovascular disease. Treatment should be discontinued for patients who have not lost ≥ 5 % of their initial body weight after 12 weeks of treatment at the 3.0 mg/day dose".***

GPs and hospital prescribers, once user-registered with the Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS), will be authorised to make an application on an individual patient basis, through the special drug request (SDR) section on the 'GP Application Suite' or under 'Services for Hospitals' on the PCRS website (www.PCRS.ie). The application for reimbursement support should be made by the prescriber responsible for the initiation of treatment.

The MAP for liraglutide (Saxenda®) includes two phases of reimbursement approval. Phase 1 is to ascertain if a patient meets the criteria for initial reimbursement support and approval for this phase is for a duration of six months. For continued reimbursement support after this time, a second reimbursement application is required to demonstrate the patient's response to treatment after 12 weeks of liraglutide (Saxenda®) at the 3 mg/day dose. Once a patient is approved for phase 2 reimbursement support, the total duration of approval is two years from the date of the initial phase 1 application.

Applications submitted for phase 1 will be reviewed by the MMP before a reimbursement recommendation is made. This recommendation will be communicated to the prescriber through the online reimbursement application system. The outcome of phase 2 applications will be automated based on the information provided and the reimbursement recommendation will be immediately visible to the prescriber.

The National Clinical Programme for Obesity has identified a number of resources and local initiatives that are available to prescribers to support adult patients with health behaviours relating to overweight and obesity. For healthcare professionals, 'Making Every Contact Count' (MECC) eLearning course is available on HSELand and includes the module *'Talking about Overweight and Obesity'*. HSE Patient Support Programmes that may be available in your area include the *'Diabetes Prevention Programme'* and *'Best Health Weight Management Programme'.* Further information on these programmes can be sought through your local HSE Community Nutrition and Dietetics Service or HSE Chronic Disease Management Hub. In addition, the HSE 'Talking about weight: A guide to developing healthy habits' booklet provides useful guidance and information to people living with overweight and obesity and is available to order from www.healthpromotion.ie.

Full details of the MAP for liraglutide (Saxenda®) and the additional resources available can be accessed on the MMP website (www.hse.ie/yourmedicines). A copy of the reimbursement information is enclosed for your information.

My thanks for your ongoing support in promoting safe, effective and cost-effective prescribing.

With best wishes,

Michael Barry.

Professor Michael Barry
National Clinical Lead, Medicines Management Programme. www.hse.ie/yourmedicines