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6th November 2023

Circular 031/23

Re: Paxlovid® (Nirmatrelvir 150 mg + ritonavir 100 mg) film coated tablets

Dear Doctor,

Please find enclosed communication from Prof Michael Barry, Clinical Lead, HSE Medicines Management Programme (MMP) in relation to prescribing of Paxlovid®.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/gp/antibiotic-prescribing/conditions-and-treatments/lower-respiratory/covid19-acute-respiratory-infection/gp-hse-paxlovid-prescribing-guidance-190123.pdf>.

Yours faithfully,

Shaun Flanagan
Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement

Re: Paxlovid® (nirmatrelvir + ritonavir)6th November 2023

Dear Colleagues,

Paxlovid® (nirmatrelvir + ritonavir) became available for use in Ireland, in specific circumstances in April 2022 (later referred to as Paxlovid®).

At this time, I would like to remind prescribers of the availability of Paxlovid®, when indicated for suitable patient populations, for the treatment of COVID-19 in adults who do not require supplemental oxygen and who are at increased risk for progressing to severe COVID-19.

There are a number of resources available to support the prescribing of Paxlovid®. The HSE and the Irish College of General Practitioners have developed a concise document [Paxlovid® Prescribing Guidance Summary for Community Settings](#), available on www.antibioticprescribing.ie. This guidance outlines the eligibility criteria and important considerations for prescribing Paxlovid®, including commencement of treatment being time critical (commenced within five days of symptom onset) and availability of renal function test results for appropriate dosing. In addition more detailed information can be found in the [HSE Interim Guidance for the Pharmacological Management of patients with COVID-19](#). (Please note, the HSE Interim Guidance is a living document and is currently under review.)

As outlined in my previous correspondence (Circular [012/22](#), Circular [020/22](#), Circular [038/22](#)), due to the risk of drug-drug interactions associated with the use of Paxlovid®, a full review of patient medication history and interaction risk is required prior to initiating a prescription.

The following resources are available to support prescribers in the review of a medication list for suitability with Paxlovid®:

- [University of Liverpool drug interaction checker](#)
- [Paxlovid® Summary of Product Characteristics](#)

If a GP wishes to avail of assistance specifically relating to the potential for drug-drug interactions associated with Paxlovid®, the National Medicines Information Centre (NMIC) is available through their enquiry answering service. This service is available Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. Drug-drug interaction enquiries should be emailed to the NMIC (nmic@stjames.ie) via secure email (e.g. Healthmail) with the patient's list of current medicines using the [NMIC Template](#) which is available on www.hse.ie/mmp, please provide your telephone contact number on the form and copy in the community pharmacy ([Circular 024/22](#)).

Full prescribing information is available in the [Paxlovid® Summary of Product Characteristics](#).

With best wishes,



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