



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Seirbhís Aisióca Príomhchúraim
Bealach amach 5 an M50
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Fionnghlas
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Circular No. 017/13

5th September 2013

Dear Pharmacist,

You will be aware of the increased emphasis on Medicines Management as the HSE considers how it can deliver further efficiencies in the Schemes Budget. To drive this agenda forward, the HSE has established a Medicines Management Programme under the leadership of Professor Michael Barry of the National Centre for Pharmacoeconomics.

Please find enclosed a communication that has issued to all GP prescribers outlining the HSE's 'preferred drugs' for ACE Inhibitors and Angiotensin II Receptor Blockers.

The HSE seeks your assistance in this initiative in explaining to patients the advantages of such an approach.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Patrick Burke'.

Patrick Burke
Primary Care Reimbursement Service



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Clinical Strategy and Programmes Directorate
Dr Steevens' Hospital
Dublin 8

2nd September, 2013

Re: Preferred Drugs Initiative

Dear Colleagues,

The National Medicines Management Programme's (MMP) 'preferred drug initiative' aims to promote safe, effective and cost-effective prescribing. We are making our second announcement later this week in relation to the preferred drugs for Angiotensin Converting Enzyme (ACE) inhibitors and Angiotensin II Receptor Blockers (ARBs).

This follows a comprehensive review of the literature and a consultation period during which we received valuable submissions from a variety of stakeholders, including prescribers. Factors which impacted on our choice of agent included the licensed therapeutic indication(s), clinical outcome data, international clinical guidelines, cost, patient-related factors and prescribing trends in Ireland. From the 10 licensed ACE inhibitors and the 8 ARBs we recommend the following preferred drugs when initiating therapy with such agents or if a change in therapy is being considered for patients with hypertension and/or heart failure:

- Preferred ACE inhibitor is **Ramipril**
- Preferred ARB is **Candesartan**

A detailed document outlining the reasons for the selection of these preferred drugs will be published on the MMP website www.hse.ie/yourmedicines shortly. We hope that this document will be a useful reference source for prescribers. In line with international best practice, we continue to recommend ACE inhibitors in preference to ARBs for the treatment of hypertension, heart failure and other licensed indications, with ARBs being reserved for patients unable to tolerate, or unsuitable for treatment with ACE inhibitors.

Prescribers may opt for alternative drugs where issues such as tolerability etc arise. However, choosing to prescribe the preferred drug will enhance quality prescribing, at the same time delivering real savings for the healthcare system and for patients who pay for their medicines. We welcome your ongoing feedback and support which will help shape the development of the MMP with the aim of creating a prescribing resource for all prescribers.

I wish to thank you for your continued support and the programme can acknowledge that since the publication of the preferred PPI (lansoprazole) and preferred Statin (simvastatin) drugs, early indications highlight the support from prescribers for this initiative and we are very grateful. For more information on the National Medicines Management programme please visit www.hse.ie/yourmedicines

With best wishes,

Prof Michael Barry,
National Clinical Lead, Medicines Management Programme