



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Seirbhís Aisíoca Príomhchúraim
Bealach amach 5 an M50
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Fionnghlas
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Circular No 005/13

16 April 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 PPIs and Statins.

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 read 'Patrick Burke', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Patrick Burke
Primary Care Reimbursement Service



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15 April, 2013

Re: Preferred Drugs

Dear Prescriber

I wish to inform you of the 'preferred drugs' initiative as recommended by the recently established Medicines Management Programme (MMP). As prescribers I am urging you to prescribe the 'preferred drugs' when prescribing a PPI or Statin. I would encourage you to review existing patients who are currently prescribed a PPI or Statin with the view to switching to the preferred drug if possible in line with the switching guidelines available on www.hse.ie

As you may be aware drug expenditure under the Community Drugs schemes (CDS) is set to exceed the €1.7 billion mark in 2013 despite employing a range of cost containment measures. Therefore it is essential to ensure that the prescribing of medicines is safe, effective and cost-effective to enable us to obtain best value from the drugs budget.

The Medicines Management Programme (MMP) was set up to ensure that patients get access to the essential medicines they need, to enhance medication safety and to facilitate cost-effective prescribing.

One of our first initiatives relates to the high cost of 'off patent' medicines including statins and proton pump inhibitors (PPI's). These two groups account for approximately 15% of total drug expenditure under the CDS.

There are 5 PPI's on the market at present, which differ significantly in price but little in terms of efficacy. In an attempt to obtain the best value for money and value for the patient, the MMP has identified preferred drugs as follows:

- **PPI preferred drug is Lansoprazole** (Zoton Fastab)
- **Statin preferred drug is Simvastatin** (Zocor)

Prescribers may opt for alternatives if there are specific issues such as tolerability etc but prescribing the preferred drug will result in real savings not just for the healthcare system but also for patients who pay for their medicines. Such savings on 'off patent' medicines will also enable us to afford the new innovative high cost medicines for our patients.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Tony O' Brien
Director General Designate

Tús Áite do
Shábháilteacht  Othar
Patient Safety  First