

Medicines Optimisation
Prescribing Memo

Nalmefene and Psychosocial Support in County Durham

Date: 7th May 2015

Memo Number: 03/15

Main Points

In December 2014 a prescribing memo advised that NICE guidance had been issued for nalmefene in alcohol dependence, and emphasized that the drug is only licensed for use in conjunction with continuous psychosocial support in patients who continue to have a high drinking risk (i.e. more than 7.5 units per day for men and more than 5 units per day for women) two weeks after initial assessment.

A link to the prescribing memo can be found here:

<http://medicines.necsu.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/No-19-2014-Nalmefene-and-Psychosocial-Support.pdf>

A link to the nice guidance can be found here:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta325>

The County Durham model of continuous psychosocial support, as commissioned by Durham County Council Public Health Team, was discussed by the Area Prescribing Committee in March 2015. Here it was recommended that nalmefene should only be made available through the specialist drug and alcohol service which will be able to provide the appropriate ongoing psychosocial support and prescribe nalmefene.

Accordingly nalmefene has been classified as a red drug in the County Durham and Darlington formulary i.e. specialist prescribing only.

GPs in DDES CCG and North Durham CCG will shortly receive further advice on how to refer clients to their local drug and alcohol Recovery Centre for assessment and ongoing support.