



Partners in improving local health

Medicines Optimisation Update

Gabapentin and Pregabalin Prescribing

NHS

Cumbria

Clinical Commissioning Group

What this includes:

Generic gabapentin as a % of all gabapentin / pregabalin: Using the most cost effective treatment for neuropathic pain and ensuring treatment is reviewed appropriately.

Identifying the problem:

- Pregabalin audit: <https://www.prescgipp.info/news/newsfeed/bulletin-119-launched-neuropathic-pain>

Suggested actions:

Patients currently being prescribed pregabalin for neuropathic pain

- For those patients prescribed pregabalin whose neuropathic pain is not effectively managed consider changing to gabapentin or amitriptyline if these have not been tried previously or if the dose of treatment has not been titrated and maximised.
- Review continued need for treatment. Consider dose reduction on an annual basis or when clinically indicated.
- Optimise prescribing of pregabalin capsules to the minimum number per dose with a twice daily frequency. Ensure doses are not outside the therapeutic dose range.
- Review patients record for compliance. Patients requesting 'ad-hoc' prescriptions and not taking regularly will not benefit from treatment (but may from other 'when required' types of analgesia).
- Ensure pregabalin is prescribed as Lyrica® when prescribed for neuropathic pain
- Reduce the dose in patients with renal impairment.- Refer to the BNF for full details.

Patients newly identified as requiring treatment for neuropathic pain

- Consider use of questionnaires to identify if neuropathic pain likely and type of neuropathic pain.
- Consider using the British Pain Inventory (BPI) questionnaire for a baseline global assessment of pain (and for re-assessing).
- Agree an achievable pain relief goal (e.g. 50% pain relief or ability to undertake global activities)
- Ensure that gabapentin and pregabalin are prescribed at an appropriate place in therapy for neuropathic pain, taking into consideration value for money.
- Provide patient information for any treatments that are unlicensed.
- Prescribe on acute prescriptions until treatment is stabilised.
- Review treatment 8 weeks after initiation and discontinue if ineffective.
- Ensure careful consideration is given before pregabalin or gabapentin are prescribed to patients with a history of substance misuse or recently released from prison.
- Nortriptyline is not a cost-effective option. Consider a change to amitriptyline if this has not been previously tried or a step up the treatment pathway to gabapentin.

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Suggested actions:

Costs of pregabalin and gabapentin (28 days – July 2016)

Drug	Dose: one twice a day	Dose: one three times a day
Gabapentin 100mg	n/a	£1.97
Gabapentin 300mg	n/a	£3.23
Gabapentin 400mg	n/a	£3.38
Gabapentin 600mg	n/a	£7.11
Gabapentin 800mg	n/a	£25.28
Pregabalin (all strengths)	£64.40	£96.60*

*does not apply to 225mg and 300mg strengths as this would be above the maximum daily dose of 600mg.

Resources:

- For guidance for Switching from pregabalin to gabapentin: <https://www.prescqipp.info/pregabalin-in-neuropathic-pain/send/80-pregabalin-in-neuropathic-pain/2463-bulletin-119-neuropathic-pain>
- Advice on how to switch between pregabalin and gabapentin for neuropathic pain <http://www.medicinesresources.nhs.uk/GetDocument.aspx?pagelid=775742>
- Detect pain questionnaire <http://www.specialistpainphysio.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/painDETECT-Questionnaire-01.pdf>
- Brief Pain Inventory (Short Form) http://www.npcrc.org/files/news/briefpain_short.pdf

References:

- National institute for health and care excellence (NICE). Clinical guideline CG173 Neuropathic Pain Pharmacological Management - Full Guideline. November 2013. Update December 2014. <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG173/Guidance/pdf/English>
- Stannard C, Brew I, Browne, E et al Expert group for Public Health England. Advice for prescribers on the risk of the misuse of pregabalin and gabapentin. 2014. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/385791/PHE-NHS_England_pregabalin_and_gabapentin_advice_Dec_2014.pdf [http://www.drugtariff.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/#/00330394-DD/DD00330393/Part VIIIA - Basic Prices of Drugs](http://www.drugtariff.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/#/00330394-DD/DD00330393/Part_VIIIA_-_Basic_Prices_of_Drugs)
- Leeds assessment of Neuropathic signs and symptoms (LANSS) http://www.endoexperience.com/documents/Apx4_LANSS.pdf