Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

Guidelines for the use of quetiapine XL

Quetiapine is available as immediate-release (standard) and modified-release (XL) tablets.

Generic immediate-release quetiapine tablets are considerably cheaper than modified-release quetiapine tablets (Seroquel® XL). The modified-release tablets should only be used when they offer a clear clinical benefit over the standard tablets. This may be the case in:

- Patients who would benefit from a faster titration before switching to immediate-release tablets (see table below)
- Patients at high risk of adverse events that are related to peak blood levels (e.g. orthostatic hypotension) – the modified-release formulation may be the preferred option for initiation of therapy (see table below)
- Patients on treatment who are experiencing side-effects that are related to peak blood levels
- Patients who are poorly compliant with treatment and would benefit from once-daily dosing

Options for initiation of quetiapine are:

	Using immediate-release tablets				**Using modified-release tablets**
	Schizophrenia		Acute Mania		Schizophrenia or acute mania
	am	pm	am	pm	once daily
Day 1	25 mg	25 mg	50 mg	50 mg	300 mg XL
Day 2	50 mg	50 mg	100 mg	100 mg	600 mg XL
Day 3	100 mg	100 mg	150 mg	150 mg	Switch to twice daily immediate release tablets and adjust dose according to response.
Day 4	150 mg	150 mg	200 mg	200 mg	
Day 5 onwards	Adjust dose according to response; usual range 300-450 mg daily in two divided doses; max. 750 mg daily		Adjust dose according to response (max. 200 mg increments); usual range 400-800 mg daily in two divided doses; max. 800 mg daily		

N.B. quetiapine XL is **not** suitable for covert administration to non-compliant patients. The modified-release nature of the formulation is completely dependent upon the tablet being swallowed whole. If tablets need to be crushed, then immediate-release tablets should be used.

Cost of 30 days' treatment with quetiapine (Drug Tariff, October 2016):