

SPC CHANGES

Hycamtin

Hycamtin (topotecan; Merck) powder for solution for infusion is now indicated for the treatment of patients with relapsed small cell lung cancer for whom retreatment with the first-line regimen is not considered appropriate. The summary of product characteristics states that the recommended dose is 1.5mg/m² body surface area/day administered by intravenous infusion over 30 minutes for five consecutive days with a three-week interval between the start of each course. If tolerated, treatment may continue until disease progression, the SPC states. Baseline neutrophil count must be $\geq 1.5 \times 10^9/L$ and platelet count must be $\geq 100 \times 10^9/L$ before the first course is administered. See SPC.

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Eloxatin

Eloxatin (oxaliplatin) concentrate for solution for infusion 5mg/ml is now available from Sanofi Aventis. Net price, 50mg vial £165, 100mg vial £330. Legal category: POM.

Meloxicam

Meloxicam tablets are now available from Genus. Net price, 30 x 7.5mg £8.95, 30 x 15mg £11.95. Legal category: POM.

Zyprexa Velotab

Zyprexa (olanzapine) Velotab 20mg is now available from Lilly. Net price, 28 £182.74. Legal category: POM.

PRODUCTS MISCELLANY

Volplex

Maelor Pharmaceuticals has reacquired the UK product distribution rights for Volplex (4 per cent succinylated gelatin solution for infusion). Volplex 500ml and 1,000ml will now be distributed on behalf of Maelor by Mawdsley Brooks. Orders should be placed on 0114 2543585. Enquiries should be directed to Maelor on 01978 810153 (e-mail enquiries@maelor.plc.uk).

Novartis

Novartis has resumed responsibility for Anafranil (clomipramine), Lioresal (baclofen) tablets and liquid, Tegretol (carbamazepine) and Ritalin (methylphenidate). All medical information queries should be directed to Novartis on 01276 698370.

Risperdal Consta

A "SmartSite needle-free vial access device" for Risperdal Consta (risperidone long-acting injection; Janssen-Cilag) will be launched on 1 March. The device will replace the current three-needle giving set supplied with Risperdal Consta. Further information is available on 0800 7318450.

DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

Ludiomil

Ludiomil (maprotiline) tablets 75mg will be discontinued by Novartis from 1 March. Ludiomil tablets 25mg will remain available.

Narcan

Narcan (naloxone hydrochloride) injection has been discontinued by Bristol-Myers Squibb. Hospital contracts will be transferred to Mayne, which can be contacted on 01926 820820.

Nystan

Nystan (nystatin) suspension 1L has been discontinued by Bristol-Myers Squibb. Nystan suspension 30ml remains available.

Yentreve

Lilly has discontinued Yentreve (duloxetine) capsules 20mg. Further information available from customer care on 01256 315999.

DRUG TARIFF UPDATES

Diamorphine

The Department of Health and the National Assembly for Wales have agreed to allow "no cheaper stock obtainable" (NCSO) endorsements for diamorphine 5mg, 100mg and 500mg injection ampoules for February 2006 prescriptions.

SUPPLY ISSUES

Dentsply

Dentsply, which is closing its anaesthetic manufacturing centre, is unable to supply xylocaine and Citanest products (except Citanest 3 per cent with Octapressin) until it has outsourced production to third parties. Further information is available on 01932 853422.

Isovorin

There are short-term supply problems with Isovorin (levofolinic acid; Wyeth) injection 25mg and 175mg. Treatment-related queries should be directed to 01628 415330, supply issues to 0845 330 0509.

Sustiva

Bristol-Myers Squibb is currently out of stock of Sustiva (efavirenz) capsules 100mg. Supply is expected to resume by the end of February. Sustiva capsules 50mg remain available. Medical-related queries should be directed to 0800 7311 736.

AWARDS

MSD

Merck Sharp & Dohme has announced the launch of its 2006 research and travel grant schemes. The research experience grant is open to undergraduates to participate in scientific research during the summer holidays. The travel grant is open to postgraduate students wishing to present their research at scientific conferences. Further information can be obtained by e-mailing msdresearchgrant@merck.com or msdtravelgrant@merck.com. Closing date 31 March.

RESOURCES

Enhanced services

The National Pharmacy Association has published a toolkit to help community pharmacy contractors in England plan, prepare for and implement enhanced services under the new contract. It is available free to NPA members and can be ordered from NPA NHS Service Development on 01727 858687 extension 3217 (e-mail nhs.dev@npa.co.uk).



Medicines Compendium

Medicines Compendium 2006 is now available from Datapharm Communications. A free copy will be sent to the medicines information officer at every NHS trust. NHS hospital pharmacies and community pharmacies can

request a free copy (on a first come first served basis) via www.medicines.org.uk, by e-mailing compendium@msg.co.uk or by faxing 0870 010 2181. The compendium can be purchased for £54 by telephoning 01233 214555 or by e-mailing compendium.order@msg.co.uk.

Substance misuse

Free-of-charge training to obtain a certificate in the management of substance misuse is being offered by the Royal College of General Practitioners Wales. The courses will take place in March and May. Further information is available on 029 2050 4604 (e-mail welshc@rcgp.org.uk).

FUTURE EVENTS

Public health

United Kingdom Public Health Association 14th annual public health forum entitled "Creating healthy, sustainable communities", 14-15 March, The International Centre, Telford. Cost £360 (members), £420 (non-members). Further information from Craig Haslop on 01737 352002 (e-mail craig.haslop@trinitypr.co.uk) or Caroline Beswick on 07709 487960 (e-mail caroline.beswick@trinitypr.co.uk). Website www.ukphaconference.org.uk.

Dermatology

British Association of Dermatologists, senior skin group spring meeting entitled "The cutting edge of skin surgery in the elderly", 16 March, Royal Society of Medicine, London. Cost £35. Full details can be obtained by leaving a message with an evening telephone number for Roger Woodford on 023 9237 4768.

Research and practice

Health Services Research and Pharmacy Practice Conference entitled "Effective public involvement", University of Bath, 3-4 April. Cost £209, discounts available. Further information and programme available at www.hsrpp.org.uk.

CORRECTIONS

Social pharmacy

Contact details for the International Social Pharmacy Workshop on 11-14 July are Janeh.doughty@nottingham.ac.uk (website www.nottingham.ac.uk/pharmacy/ISPW/index.html) and not as stated in last week's *Journal* (p201).

Correction

Lilly has discontinued Yentreve (duloxetine) capsules 56 x 20mg. The 28 x 20mg capsules presentation is still available