

## SPC CHANGES

### Caelyx

The summary of product characteristics for Caelyx (doxorubicin hydrochloride; Schering-Plough) now includes additional information about Caelyx's nephrotoxicity. See SPC.

### Hycamtin

The summary of product characteristics for Hycamtin (topotecan; GSK) now includes an additional indication, in combination with cisplatin, for the treatment of patients with carcinoma of the cervix recurrent after radiotherapy and for patients with stage IVB disease. Patients with prior exposure to cisplatin require a sustained treatment-free interval to justify treatment with the combination. The initial dose for this indications is 0.75mg/m<sup>2</sup>/day, administered as a 30-minute intravenous infusion on days 1, 2 and 3. Cisplatin is administered on day 1 at a dose of 50mg/m<sup>2</sup>/day following the topotecan dose. The treatment schedule is repeated every 21 days for six courses or until the disease progresses. See SPC.

### Maxolon

The summaries of product characteristics for Maxolon (metoclopramide hydrochloride; Shire) injection, paediatric liquid, syrup, tablets, Maxolon High Dose injection and Maxolon SR capsules have been updated. They now state that care should be taken when using Maxolon for patients with a history of atopy, including asthma, and that very rarely hypersensitivity, including anaphylaxis, has been reported in those using Maxolon. In addition, anxiety has been added to the list of rare undesirable effects. See SPC.

### Rebetol

The summary of product characteristics for Rebetol (ribavirin; Schering-Plough) now states that the dose should be kept as close as possible to the recommended standard dose. See SPC.

### Remicade

The summary of product characteristics for Remicade (infliximab; Schering-Plough) has been updated. It now states that Remicade is not recommended for use in children under 17 years of age. There is also additional information about infusion times, infusion-related reactions and juvenile rheumatoid arthritis patients. See SPC.

### ViraferonPeg

The summary of product characteristics for ViraferonPeg (peginterferon alfa-2b; Schering-Plough) injection pre-filled pen now states that, when ViraferonPeg injection pre-filled pen is administered in combination with ribavirin, subjects with impaired renal function should be carefully monitored with respect to the development of anaemia. There is also additional information about administration of ViraferonPeg to patients with chronic hepatitis C who are on stable methadone maintenance therapy and are naive to peginterferon alfa-2b therapy. See SPC.

## PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

### Enbrel

Enbrel (etanercept; Wyeth) is now available in 50mg pre-filled syringes. Net price: 4 x pre-filled syringes, £715. Legal category: POM.

## DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

### Aerodiol

Servier Laboratories has discontinued Aerodiol (estradiol) nasal spray. The company expects stocks to be exhausted by the end of March 2007.

### Pylorid

GlaxoSmithKline has discontinued Pylorid (ranitidine bismuth citrate) tablets 400mg. The company expects stocks to be exhausted by the end of January 2007.

## DRUG TARIFF UPDATES

### Oxybutynin and prednisolone

The Department of Health and the National Assembly for Wales have agreed to allow "no cheaper stock obtainable" (NCSO) endorsements for oxybutynin tablets 5mg and prednisolone enteric coated tablets 2.5mg and 5mg for December prescriptions.

Contact us

Notice-board welcomes information relevant to pharmacists. There is no charge for inclusion of an item but *The Journal* is unable to guarantee a particular publication date. Information can be e-mailed to notice-board@pharmj.org.uk

## MEDICAL DEVICE ALERT

### Blood glucose meters

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has continued to receive reports of incidents in which the units of measurement displayed have changed from mmol/L to mg/dL on some blood glucose meters, including OneTouch Ultra, InDuo and PocketScan meters. These blood glucose meters are used with OneTouch Ultra or PocketScan test strips.

The units of measure may change if the meter is dropped, or if the battery is changed when the meter is switched on. There may also be some meters for which the units of measurement displayed can inadvertently be changed by the user. LifeScan is planning a comprehensive meter replacement programme for all affected meters and users can expect to be contacted by Lifescan regarding this issue in early 2007.

Pharmacists supplying OneTouch Ultra or PocketScan test strips are asked to advise the user to: check whether they have an affected meter and if so to check the units of measurement displayed; be extra vigilant at checking the units of measurement displayed every time they test, especially if the meter is dropped or the battery has been changed; and contact the LifeScan customer care line immediately (on 0800 028 8039) for a replacement meter if their meter is reading in mg/dL. Meters can continue to be used as long as users ensure that the meter is reading in mmol/L every time they test. For instructions on how to do this users should read the owner's booklet or contact the customer care line. This alert is an addition to previous MHRA warnings (*PJ*, 14 May 2005, p579, 18 March, p317, and 17 June, p715).

## AWARDS

### Psychiatric pharmacy

The UK Psychiatric Pharmacy Group has launched a bursary for projects undertaken in mental health by undergraduate pharmacy students. The award will include attendance at the UKPPG annual psychiatric pharmacy conference. Further information about the bursary is available from Denise Taylor on 01225 383677 (e-mail prsdatt@bath.ac.uk). Closing date 29 June 2007.

## APPOINTMENTS

### Martin Hindle

Martin Hindle, MRPharmS, has been appointed chairman of University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust. Mr Hindle will take up the appointment on 1 January 2007.

## CHRISTMAS CLOSURES

### CPP

The College of Pharmacy Practice will close from 1pm on 22 December until 9am on 2 January 2007.

### Lundbeck

The offices of Lundbeck will close from 3.45pm on 22 December until 8.45am on 2 January 2007. A medical information service for urgent enquiries will be available

27-29 December 9am to 5pm on 07785 293179.

### Novartis

Novartis main switchboard will close from 5.30pm on 22 December until 2 January 2007. Medical information will be available from 10am to 4pm on 27, 28 and 29 December. Customer services will be available between 10am and 3pm on 27, 28 and 29 December. An emergency medical information service will be available outside these hours on 01276 698370.

### Shire

Shire medical information will be closed from 12.30pm on 22 December until 9am on 27 December and from 3pm on 29 December until 9am on 2 January. An emergency out-of-hours service will be available on 01256 894000. Customer services will be closed from 5pm on 22 December until 9am on 2 January.

## FUTURE EVENTS

### NPSA roadshows

The National Patient Safety Agency is offering roadshows throughout the south of England to engage NHS staff in improving patient safety. Available free of charge until the end of March 2007. Further information is available from Alison Prizeman on 01322 614794 (e-mail alison.prizeman@npsa.nhs.uk).