COVID-19 Therapeutic Alert

CEM/CMO/2021/011(U) 14 December 2021

This alert supersedes the therapeutic alert CEM/CMO/2021/011 issued on 12 April 2021.

Withdrawal of the Recommendation for Consideration of Inhaled Budesonide as a Treatment Option for COVID-19

**Recommendation**

Inhaled budesonide should no longer be considered as a treatment for individuals with COVID-19 infection other than within the context of a clinical trial. People already using budesonide for conditions other than COVID-19 should continue treatment if they test positive for COVID-19.

**Supporting Evidence**

Final results from the PRINCIPLE and STOIC trials of inhaled budesonide as a treatment for mild to moderate COVID-19 infection have been published.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has updated its COVID-19 Rapid Guideline to recommend that inhaled budesonide is only used to treat COVID-19 as part of a clinical trial.

**Action**

Clinical teams within primary and secondary care, community pharmacies and dispensing practices are asked to note the revised recommendation that:

**Inhaled budesonide should no longer be considered as a treatment for individuals with COVID-19 infection other than within the context of a clinical trial.**

Prescribers may wish to refer to the NICE COVID-19 Rapid Guideline for further information.

**Distribution**

General Practice
NHS 111
Community Pharmacies
Enquiries

**England**
Enquiries from general practice and community pharmacy should be directed to the local clinical commissioning group. Enquiries from NHS trusts in England should be directed to the trust pharmacy team who will escalate issues to the Regional Chief Pharmacist and national teams if required. Further information can be requested from the dedicated email address: england.spoc-c19therapeutics@nhs.net.

**Northern Ireland**
Enquiries from general practice and community pharmacy should be directed to your local HSCB office. Enquiries from hospitals in Northern Ireland should be directed to your hospital pharmacy team who will escalate issues to the Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service or Pharmaceutical Directorate at the Department of Health if required. Further information can be obtained by contacting RPHPS.Admin@northerntrust.hscni.net.

**Scotland**
Enquiries in Scotland should be directed to the Health Board Director of Pharmacy who will escalate issues to either NHS National Procurement or the Scottish Government's Medicines Policy Team if required. Contact should be made using the following emails: nss.nhssmedicineshortages@nhs.scot or medicines.policy@gov.scot.

**Wales**
Enquiries in Wales should be directed to the health board’s Chief Pharmacist who will escalate issues to the Pharmacy and Prescribing Team at Welsh Government if required. Enquiries to the Welsh Government should be directed to: COVID-19.Pharmacy.Prescribing@gov.wales.