

BY E-MAIL
Trust Chief Executives
All GP practices, for onward dissemination
to practice nursing staff
GP Out of Hours
All Community Pharmacies
Nurse prescribers

21 May 2013

Dear Colleague

**Re: Northern Ireland Implementation of HSC (SQSD) 3/11 Adult
Passport to Safer Use of Insulin**

This letter outlines the implementation arrangements in Northern Ireland for HSC (SQSD) 3/11 Adult Passport to Safer Use of Insulin (see attached).

1. Background:

The DHSSPS circular is based on the “The Adult Patient’s Passport to Safer Use of Insulin” NPSA alert (NPSA/2011/PSA003, 30 March 2011), which recommends:

- (i) Adult patients on insulin therapy receive a patient information booklet and an Insulin Passport to help provide accurate identification of their current insulin products and provide essential information across healthcare sectors.
- (ii) Healthcare professionals and patients are informed how the Insulin Passport and associated patient information can be used to improve safety.
- (iii) When prescriptions of insulin are prescribed, dispensed or administered, healthcare professionals cross-reference available information to confirm the correct identity of insulin products.
- (iv) Systems are in place to enable hospital inpatients to self-administer insulin where feasible and safe.

2. Northern Ireland Sub-Group:

A subgroup, led by the HSC Safety Forum, was set up to agree the implementation arrangements for this circular, and included representatives from PHA, Trusts and HSCB. The approach suggested by the sub-group has been agreed with DHSSPS. As a result of the work of the sub-group, a number of resources have been developed:

(a) Patient information Leaflet (PIL)

A Northern Ireland specific patient information leaflet has been developed for patients (attached for information) and copies of this will be supplied to Trusts and GP practices for onward supply to patients. GPs can obtain additional copies via the GP intranet under "Insulin Passport":

http://primarycare.hscni.net/PharmMM_Resources_Clinical%20Resources.htm#Diabetes. Community pharmacists can view this on the HSCB internet at:

http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/medicinesmanagement/Prescribing%20Guidance/index.html#P-1_0

Patients who have diabetes and use insulin should be offered a copy of the PIL at their next routine appointment for their diabetic care, and given the opportunity to discuss its content with a healthcare professional. It should be noted that this PIL should be used along with other relevant resources to educate and update patients about their diabetes and its management, and it should not be used as a stand-alone resource.

(b) Insulin Passports

It has also been agreed that the insulin-specific cards produced by the pharmaceutical industry will be used as insulin passports and that each patient should be supplied with a passport(s) that is appropriate for their insulin(s). Insulin passports are available from the pharmaceutical companies who produce the insulin and examples of these can be seen at

http://www.diabetes.nhs.uk/safety/insulin_passports/?#sg_anchor .

Appendix 1 contains the pharmaceutical company contact details who can arrange supply of insulin passports.

It is the responsibility of the healthcare professional who educates the patient about administration of insulin to issue a patient information leaflet and Insulin Passport. They are also responsible for issuing replacement Insulin Passports where required.

It should be noted that the Insulin Passport will not suit all patients with diabetes. There may be circumstances where, in the judgement of the healthcare professional, patients are not able to manage their own insulin use. Such circumstances should be fully documented and alternative arrangements made to minimise the problems of errors with insulin. Implementation of this circular does not override the individual responsibility of healthcare professionals to make appropriate decisions in the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or carer.

(c) Poster

A poster has been developed in line with the above resources and copies of this will also be sent to Trusts and GP practices. The poster should be displayed in patient treatment areas to prompt patients to ask for a leaflet and passport.

(d) Framework for Supervised Self-administration of Insulin

Work is ongoing on a framework to enable hospital inpatients to self-administer insulin under supervision where feasible and safe, and details of this will be sent out in the near future.

3. Actions required for Implementation

All organisations should ensure that (i) the information contained in this letter is disseminated to relevant staff; (ii) a plan is developed for implementation across the organisation and (iii) all staff involved in the care of patients on insulin are aware of the importance of checking the patient's Insulin Passport when prescribing, dispensing or administering insulin.

(i) Trusts

Supply of leaflet and Insulin Passport

If the patient is being managed as hospital care or part of a shared care arrangement, the Trust is responsible for providing both the Insulin Passport and the patient information leaflet. It is the responsibility of the diabetic team in the Trust to ensure that patients on insulin are provided with a leaflet and passport at their next routine appointment. If the insulin product changes or the patient has lost their previous passport, the diabetic team should ensure that patients receive a replacement passport.

Cross referencing Insulin Passports

When patients are being admitted to hospital, they should be asked for their Insulin Passport as a way of cross checking the correct insulin products.

(ii) GP practices

Shared Care Patients

The majority of patients on insulin will be managed under a shared care arrangement between the GP practice and the Trust diabetic team. As outlined above, the Trust diabetic team will be responsible for providing both the Insulin Passport and patient information leaflet when the patient has their next routine review appointment. Where possible, GP practice staff should opportunistically check that these patients have received an Insulin Passport and PIL and direct them back to the Trust as required.

GP Practice Managed Patients

A small number of patients will have their insulin managed solely by the GP practice. For these patients, the GP practice is responsible for providing both the Insulin Passport and patient information leaflet when the patient has their next routine review appointment. As described above, Insulin Passports are available from the pharmaceutical companies who produce the insulin (see Appendix 1 for contact

details). Additional copies of the patient information leaflet can be downloaded as outlined above.

All patients

In line with NPSA recommendations, when insulin is prescribed, GPs should cross-reference available information to confirm the correct identity of insulin products. The Insulin Passport may be used for this purpose, or if this is not possible, the patient's prescribing history should be checked. The introduction of the Insulin Passport has the potential to increase queries from community pharmacists to GP practices about patients' insulin, and practices are asked to facilitate any such requests for clarification.

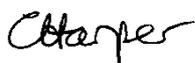
(iii) Community Pharmacies

In line with the NPSA recommendations, when dispensing a prescription for insulin, pharmacy staff should cross-reference the insulin prescription with the patient's Insulin Passport(s) if it is available at the time of dispensing, as it provides an additional check to make a patient's use of insulin safer. It is recognised that factors beyond the control of patients or healthcare professionals may mean it is not always possible to use a patient's Insulin Passport to validate the correct insulin product(s) and absence of the passport should not prevent dispensing. It is always recommended that there is a verbal confirmation of the insulin being dispensed and this is particularly important if the Insulin Passport is not available.

If there is a discrepancy between the Insulin Passport and the prescription, pharmacy staff should clarify directly with the patient or carer and, where appropriate, contact the prescriber.

If you have any queries about this, please contact Dr Jackie McCall, Consultant in Public Health, PHA on jackie.mccall@hscni.net.

Yours sincerely



Dr Carolyn Harper
Executive Medical Director/Director of Public Health

Cc Trust Governance Leads
Trust Medical Directors
Alerts, HSCB
Jackie McCall
Brenda Bradley

Appendix 1: Insulin passport company contacts

Company	Contact details
Wockhardt	Ceri Gough Woodhardt UK Ltd Ash Road North Wrexham Industrial Estate Wrexham Tel: (01978) 661 261 ceri.gough@wockhardt.co.uk 07711372610
Novo nordisk	Kevin Joyce – Regional Manager Novo Nordisk Ltd Broadfield Park Brighton Road Crawley West Sussex RH11 9RT Tel: (01293) 613 555 kejy@novonordisk.com 07525766665 Martina McLaren 07740631711 Alison Conn 07703750404
Eli Lilly	Eugene Reid 07834312129 Lilly House Priestly Road Basingstoke Hampshire RG24 9NL
Sanofi Aventis	Sanofi Aventis Ltd 1 Onslow Street Guildford Surrey GU1 4YS Tel: (01483) 505 515 Uk-medicalinformation@sanofi-aventis.com Ciaran Campbell 07725768641