

To contact NHS BSW ICB Medicines Optimisation Team: ✉ bswicb.prescribing@nhs.net
Website: <https://bswtogether.org.uk/medicines/>

BSW Area Prescribing Committee (APC) Updates (see all recent decisions in full [here](#))

No APC meeting in August but a few minor amendments made to [Formulary](#) as follows

- **Prescribing Guidance for Testosterone for Hypogonadism in Males** has been published and added to [Formulary](#)
- **Semaglutide** for T2DM is **first line**, **Tirzepatide** (Mounjaro) is **2nd line use for Type 2 diabetes after semaglutide (Ozempic®) has been tried and failed due to intolerance or poor response. Prescribed in line with criteria in NICE TA924 see [Formulary](#)**
- Discontinuation notices have been issued for vials of Humulin I, Humulin M3, Humalog Mix25 and Humulin S.
- Progynova transdermal patches are no longer available.
- The latest Medicines Supply Notification (MSN) regarding the discontinuation of Levemir has been published.
- Dapagliflozin is now available as a generic formulation and **should be used as first line for all indications** [Formulary](#)
- A licensed liquid hydrocortisone preparation is now available for paediatric use (designated RED) [Formulary](#)
- Palivizumab has been replaced by nirsevimab for RSV prophylaxis.

Responding to queries via the prescribing inbox- bsw.prescribing@nhs.net

Responding to practice queries – Enteral feed tube, swallowing difficulties, crushing medications, clinical queries and queries re excipients (i.e. suitability for lactose intolerant, Vegetarians/Vegan patients)

BSW Medicines Optimisation Team do not now have access to NEWT guidelines so are no longer able to answer queries around enteral feed tubes, swallowing difficulties or crushing and dispersing tablets for children/infants. We also will no longer answer excipient queries e.g. suitability for lactose intolerant, Vegetarians/Vegan patients.

There are a couple of resources available to answer some of these queries, should you wish to explore:-

- [SPS - Specialist Pharmacy Service – The first stop for professional medicines advice](#)
- Advanced search for excipients - [Search by Word or Phrase-electronic medicines compendium \(emc\)](#)

If neither of these resources are useful then please direct your queries to **National Medicines Information** – [Medicines Advice contact details – SPS - Specialist Pharmacy Service – The first stop for professional medicines advice](#)

If practices would like to **purchase NEWT guidelines**, either for an individual or a PCN then details can be found here - [NEWT Guidelines - Subscription Details](#)

As a reminder we are also not able to answer-

Individual patients' **clinical queries** – these should be directed to **National Medicines Information** – [Medicines Advice contact details – SPS - Specialist Pharmacy Service – The first stop for professional medicines advice](#)

Vaccine queries e.g. unscheduled vaccination requested by consultant /not covered by [The Green Book](#) please direct your queries to England.swicars@nhs.net - the Immunisations Clinical Advice Service (ICARS)

Lastly for other queries we have useful information and guidance on our APC/MO website -[BSW APC/MO website](#) and also BSW [Formulary](#) .

Royal United Hospital Low Molecular Weight Heparin Choice to **Change to the Brand Inhixa (enoxaparin)**

From the **01/10/2025**- the **RUH, Bath** will be switching from using dalteparin (Fragmin) to **enoxaparin (Inhixa)** as its first line choice of low molecular weight heparin (LMWH). This is a significant cost saving and in line with practice in most other Acute Trusts outside BSW.

This means that **BSW formulary currently includes two LMWH options** dalteparin (Fragmin) and enoxaparin (Inhixa).

Most prescribing of LMWH is done by secondary care however some patients such as those with sub-therapeutic INRs who are usually on warfarin and high risk of thrombosis, or those with a cancer associated thrombosis and are part of a shared care agreement - may be eligible for LMWH prescribing in primary care.

GPs within the RUH area will begin to see patients **with a cancer associated thrombosis** prescribed enoxaparin as the 'Inhixa' brand via shared care instead of dalteparin (Fragmin brand) see BSW [Formulary](#) and [Enoxaparin \(Inhixa\) for the treatment of cancer associated thrombosis \(RUH\)](#) .If you are asked to **prescribe Inhixa (enoxaparin) via shared care please prescribe as the brand Inhixa** (enoxaparin) within SystmOne. It has been added to the BSW Formulary on SystmOne and should automatically default to this brand when searching for Enoxaparin.

Practices providing the INR Monitoring service can continue to prescribe dalteparin (Fragmin) when patients, on Warfarin, with a high thrombosis risk present with a sub-therapeutic INR as per our local guidance [Management-of-subtherapeutic-inrs-in-patients-on-vitamin-k-antagonists-e-g-warfarin](#) We will facilitate education/training for prescribing enoxaparin (Inhixa) for this indication in the coming months and provide updated guidance.

The **other acute trusts within BSW ICS will also be switching to enoxaparin (Inhixa) over the coming months**. We will update you when they are due to switch.

Any queries should be directed to the RUH Anticoagulation Team on 01225 825812 or ruh-tr.AnticoagulationTeam@nhs.net.

Updated documents

- BSW Prescribing 2025-26 Savings Recommendations Prescribe Well – Spend Less [PWSL August 2025](#)
- BSW Prescribing Guidance for Moderately to Severely Frail Patients [BSW-Frailty-Prescribing-Guidance-reviewed-August-2025-FINAL.pdf](#)
- Emergency Access to Medicines Scheme information - participating pharmacies [Specialist-EOL-Medicines-Participating-Pharmacies-October-2025.pdf](#)
- Emergency Access to Medicines Scheme - list of medications- [Specialist-Medicines-Palliative-Care-Medication-List-October-2025.pdf](#)

New documents

- [Community Pharmacies with stock of Covid Antiviral Medicines- Covid-Antiviral-Pharmacies-Winter-2025-26-1.pdf](#)

MHRA confirms taking Paracetamol during pregnancy remains safe

The MHRA has released a declaration stating patients should be reminded and reassured that there is no evidence that taking Paracetamol during pregnancy causes autism in children. To read more please see full information and news story here [-MHRA confirms taking paracetamol during pregnancy remains safe and there is no evidence it causes autism in children](#)
 Paracetamol is **recommended as the first-choice pain reliever for pregnant women**, used at the lowest dose and for the shortest duration. It also acts as an antipyretic and is therefore used to treat fever. Patients should not stop taking their pain medicines as **untreated pain and fever can pose risks** to the unborn child.

Cost Saving drug switch of the month – Blood Glucose Testing Strips

The table below shows the spend in Q1 (April-June 25) for the top 10 testing strips **not included in the NHSE commissioning recommendations** (updated June 2025 to evaluate quality and best value) across BSW see [here](#) . Over **£100k could be saved by switching** to a formulary preferred blood glucose meter and testing strips (consider the functionality of the given meter for suitable alternatives by referring to the NHSE document).

*****Please note: Instant, Freestyle Optium and Contour Next testing strips are included within the BSW self-monitoring guideline for specific patients only**, given they are endorsed by local specialist teams.- [BSW Self-Monitoring of Blood Glucose in Diabetes Guideline](#)

Testing Strip	Pack size	Price	BSW Spend (April-June 25)
GlucRx Nexus testing strips	50	£8.95	£53,074.74
Instant testing strips ***	50	£5.95	£22,267.78
Mobile cassette	50	£10.24	£21,815.82
FreeStyle Optium testing strips***	50	£16.30	£19,358.56
Aviva testing strips	50	£12.99	£13,639.98
Guide testing strips	50	£16.21	£6,725.04
Performa testing strips	50	£5.99	£6,393.09
Contour Next testing strips ***	50	£16.21	£5,592.86
GlucMen areo Sensor testing strips	50	£7.25	£3,608.83
FreeStyle Lite testing strips	50	£16.41	£2,969.01

A search to identify patients can be located on SystmOne as below:

Clinical Reporting > BSW General Practice > Medicine Optimisation Team > Cost Savings

Action Required

As we are now halfway through the financial year, **please do not delay in sending cost savings** that that your practice has completed so far to bswibc.prescribing@nhs.net , as this will contribute towards your Prescribing Quality Scheme (PQS) target. Please refer to your practice Q1 quarterly report for 25/26 which includes the target for your practice.

Rybelsus® (oral semaglutide): risk of medication error due to introduction of new formulation with increased bioavailability

Some practices may have received a [Healthcare Professionals Letter](#) from Novo Nordisk regarding an upcoming change to the formulation of Rybelsus® (oral semaglutide). The updated formulation offers improved bioavailability, meaning lower doses are now required to achieve the same therapeutic effect.

As part of this change, three new lower-strength tablets (also smaller in size) are expected to be released. Further details can be found in the Risk Minimisation Materials available here: [Rybelsus Patient Transition Guide](#)

Currently, **the new strengths are not yet available for prescribing** within clinical systems, but they are anticipated to be added imminently. We expect a formal communication from Novo Nordisk in the coming days to confirm this.

For a transitional period, both the old and new strengths will be available. However, the original formulation is expected to be phased out and become unavailable by the end of the year.

We are sharing this update to ensure teams are aware of the upcoming changes. Once the new strengths are available, patients will need to be counselled appropriately and switched to the appropriate strength of the new formulation using the [Rybelsus Patient Transition Guide](#).

Risk minimisation measures for medicines

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has updated its guidance on **risk minimisation measures** to support the safe and effective use of medicines across the UK healthcare system.

These measures are essential tools used by healthcare professionals, patients, and carers to reduce the risk of adverse events and ensure medicines are used appropriately. While **routine measures**—like prescription-only status, pack size, and patient leaflets—are standard, **additional measures** may be required for certain medicines with higher risk profiles.

Key types of additional risk minimisation include:

- Patient Guidance: Clear, accessible materials to help patients understand risks and proper use.
- Healthcare Professional Guidance: Detailed prescribing and monitoring instructions.
- Patient Cards: Portable summaries of key safety information.
- Educational Tools: Multimedia resources for training and awareness.
- Controlled Access & Distribution Systems: Ensuring medicines reach only appropriate patients.
- Pregnancy Prevention Programmes (PPP): For medicines with teratogenic risks, combining education and strict prescribing protocols.

These measures are not promotional tools—they are **safety interventions**. The MHRA may mandate them during licensing or following safety reviews, always considering patient impact and feasibility.

For more information, visit the full guidance on GOV.UK: [Risk Minimisation Measures for Medicines](#)

Some Risk Minimisation Materials are found in the medicines entry within the electronic medicines compendium(search under the drug name) here- [Home - electronic medicines compendium \(emc\)](#)