



QUETIAPINE –Think Immediate Release not Modified Release!

NHS Tayside is facing major financial challenges. There is an opportunity to make significant cost savings by using immediate release (IR) quetiapine instead of modified release (MR) quetiapine (an atypical antipsychotic).

There are two preparations of generic quetiapine available: immediate release (IR) tablets and modified release (MR) tablets. Both formulations have similar clinical efficacy with very little difference in side-effect profile but the modified release preparation is considerably more expensive.

See table below for examples of equivalent immediate release doses:

Modified Release Quetiapine	Cost for 30 days treatment (Drug Tariff, February 2017)	Immediate release	Cost for 30 days treatment (Drug Tariff, February 2017)
50mg MR daily	£33.83	25mg twice daily	£1.44
150mg MR daily	£56.55	75mg twice daily or 50mg morning and 100mg at night	£4.32 £2.62
200mg MR daily	£56.55	100mg twice daily	£2.36
300mg MR daily	£85.00	150mg twice daily	£7.67
400mg MR daily	£113.10	200mg twice daily	£6.53

Points to consider:

- Quetiapine is always prescribed generically.
- New patients are commenced on immediate release quetiapine.
- Patients who are already on treatment with modified release quetiapine are considered for a switch to immediate release tablets twice daily unless there are compelling clinical reasons not to do so.
- If an MR preparation is being prescribed twice daily then a straight swap should be possible.
- If sedation is a potential problem then consideration could be given to administering a larger proportion of the dose at night.
- If a patient is unable to tolerate a switch then the reason is documented in their record and communicated to the patient's GP.

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