

TAYSIDE PRESCRIBER

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Scottish Medicines Consortium (formerly Scottish Consortium of Drug & Therapeutics Committees)

Professor David Lawson attended the most recent meeting of the ADTC at which he described progress to date in the establishment of a Scottish Medicines Consortium. The Consortium, which will initially be chaired by Professor Lawson, has come about in recognition that there is much to be gained by communicating and sharing expertise between Drug & Therapeutics Committees across Scotland. The remit of the Consortium, which will include representatives from the Scottish Health Board Areas, is to advise the Health Minister, the Chief Medical Officer and Area Drug & Therapeutics Committees on relevant matters and to provide the basis for decision making at the local level. With respect to new drugs, a New Drugs Sub-Group will be formed from the existing Scottish ADTC structure. The Sub-Group will meet regularly (at monthly intervals) to review all new (chemical entities) drugs submitted by their manufacturers prior to marketing. By this process it is intended that information and advice on cost-effectiveness which is evidence-based will be available to all prescribers at the time of launch or as soon as possible thereafter. It will however remain the responsibility of Health Boards and Trusts to determine local priorities and issues surrounding affordability and the introduction of new drugs in practice. Final details of the structure and operation of the Consortium and New Drugs Sub-Group are anticipated in the next few weeks.

Tayside Guidelines on Treatment of Erectile Dysfunction - referral of men with severe distress

Local guidelines on the referral of men whose erectile dysfunction is considered to be the cause of severe distress were issued last month (ADTC Supplement, No. 12, February 2001). Although the pathway described exists, and is currently used by a limited number of patients, there is no additional funding for impotence treatments.

Evaluation of New Drugs

The following drugs have been reviewed and advice issued by the Drug Evaluation in hospitalized patients.

Eptifibatide (Integrilin®) - a glycoprotein IIb/IIIa inhibitor which inhibits platelet activation in unstable coronary syndromes. For use under CCU specialist supervision in hospitalized patients. Similar considerations apply in the case of tirofiban (Aggrastat®)
Category 2(a) Hospital use only

Levetiracetam (Keppra®) - an antiepileptic drug for 3rd line adjunctive therapy in partial seizures with or without secondary generalization in patients refractory to and 2nd line adjunctive therapies.
Category 2(b) Shared care

Levobupivacaine (Chirocaine®) - a local anaesthetic proposed as an alternative to bupivacaine for use in hospital. Issues surrounding the increased safety of levobupivacaine require to be clarified. Further advice on category to follow.

Linezolid (Zyvox®) - a new oral/IV antibiotic available in hospitals only (although it may be used in hospital-supplied home antibiotic therapy). A protocol has been produced which governs the terms under which linezolid is supplied and subsequently monitored. Guidelines will be available in an early issue of Tayside Prescriber.
Category 2(a) Hospital use only

Mometasone (Nasonex®) intranasal - not considered to be a new drug. If necessary an application for inclusion in the Area Drug Formulary is the most appropriate method of recommending its use in practice.

Pioglitazone (Actos®) - for addition to metformin or sulphonylurea (but not both) to improve control in type 2 diabetes.

Category 1(b) General use within specialist protocol

(Note that the diabetologists have indicated on the DARTS website that pioglitazone and rosiglitazone should be prescribed according to the agreed protocol and be subject to review at the end of one year, at which time data on the relative effectiveness of these two agents should be available.)

Your views on the above and other aspects of the introduction of new drugs in practice are welcomed. Send comments to: Peter Clough, Secretary to ADTC, Department of Pharmacy, Ninewells Hospital. Telephone: 01382 660111 Ext: 32351. e-mail gus.macconnachie@tuht.scot.nhs.uk