

Medicines Matters

June 2026



Clozapine – EMIS Safety Protocol

Background

Clozapine is an antipsychotic used for Treatment Resistant Schizophrenia (TRS). It may also be used for psychotic disorders occurring in Parkinson's disease when standard treatment has failed.

Clozapine is classified as a **RED** (Hospital Only) drug on [Lancashire and South Cumbria Formulary](#), which means it must only be prescribed by secondary or tertiary care mental health services.

Prescribing responsibility cannot transfer to GPs under any circumstances.

Clozapine – EMIS Safety Protocol

In February 2022 the Medicines Optimisation Team (MOT) collaborated with Lancashire & South Cumbria Foundation Trust (LSCFT) and IT colleagues to produce a clozapine prescribing safety protocol. The protocol flags the following information to alert prescribers to the **potentially fatal side effects of clozapine**.

+++THIS PATIENT IS TAKING CLOZAPINE+++

1. **INFECTION:** Consider urgent FBC if there are signs and symptoms of infection, e.g., sore throat, fever, or flu like symptoms. Clinicians should seek specialist guidance if neutropenia or agranulocytosis is identified and simultaneously notify the mental health team.
2. **CONSTIPATION:** All patients on clozapine must be monitored and treated for constipation. Clozapine-induced gastrointestinal hypomotility can progress to severe and fatal bowel obstruction.
3. **SMOKING:** On cessation of smoking, plasma clozapine levels can rise dramatically (up to 70%) due to reduced clozapine metabolism. If patients change their smoking status (including switching to an e-cigarette or starting nicotine replacement therapy) the mental health team must be informed so that plasma levels can be monitored and dose adjustments made.

The Clozapine EMIS Safety Protocol is being installed onto **all practice EMIS systems** across the ICB, by the Data Quality Team. Should you decide that you do not want the protocol on your practice EMIS system, you can deactivate it once it has been installed.

Additional advice for prescribers

To support patient safety, please ensure that all medicines prescribed and supplied by secondary care (for example, clozapine) are accurately recorded in the patient's clinical record under the **'Hospital Only'** section of the medication screen.

Further guidance on how to add medicines to the 'Hospital Only' section in EMIS Web can be found in the local [Hospital Only Standard Operating Procedure \(SOP\)](#).

Accurate recording of clozapine as a hospital only medicine provides significant patient safety benefits and helps to minimise the following risks:

- Inadvertent co-prescribing of medicines with clinically significant interactions.
- Failure to recognise or appropriately attribute adverse effects to clozapine therapy.
- Clozapine being omitted or overlooked on admission to another Trust. Please note that hospitals are currently unable to add hospital only prescribed medicines directly to a patient's Summary Care Record, making accurate primary care documentation essential.