NHS
Midlands and Lancashire
Commissioning Support Unit

Prescribing tip for actioning by Practice

EMIS Web protocol – Clozapine

Clozapine is an antipsychotic used for Treatment Resistant Schizophrenia. It may also be used for psychotic disorders occurring in Parkinson's disease when standard treatment has failed. Clozapine is classed as a **RED** drug on LSCMMG, which means it must **only** be prescribed by secondary care mental health services and prescribing responsibility **cannot** transfer to GPs under any circumstances.

Please ensure information regarding clozapine is added to the EMIS record for each patient; benefits include enhancing patient safety and minimising the following potential risks:
- ✓ Inadvertent co-prescribing of interacting medications
- ✓ The potential to miss side effects or not attribute them to clozapine therapy
- ✓ Clozapine being missed on admission if admitted to another Trust. Hospitals are currently not able to add hospital-only prescribed medicines directly onto a patients' summary care record

The Medicines Optimisation Team have worked together with LSCFT and IT colleagues to agree a prescribing protocol which will flag 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 Medicines Optimisation Team will work with all practices to install the protocol on to the EMIS web clinical system unless otherwise advised.

Advice for prescribers:

- ✓ To improve patient safety please ensure that details of all medicines prescribed and supplied by the hospital are entered onto the patient's clinical record under the **'Hospital Only'** section of the medication screen. Please see Prescribing Tip 203 for further details of how to add Hospital Only medicines to EMIS.
- ✓ **If staff (who regularly add medication to EMIS) do not possess the correct permissions to add RED drugs (such as Clozapine), they should flag this as a priority to an appropriate member of practice staff for adding.**

To contact the Medicines Optimisation Team please phone 01772 214302
If you have any suggestions for future topics to cover in our prescribing tips, please contact nicola.schaffel@nhs.net