



- **Amendments to pharmacy regulations to introduce OPD +/- 10% dispensing**
From January 2025, new Original Pack Dispensing (OPD) rules come into effect for NHS prescriptions. This will give pharmacies the flexibility to supply up to 10% more or less than the prescribed quantity, if that would mean the medicine could be dispensed in the manufacturer's original pack. For further details, please see [Amendments to pharmacy regulations to introduce OPD +/- 10% dispensing - Community Pharmacy England \(cpe.org.uk\)](https://www.cpe.org.uk/amendments-to-pharmacy-regulations-to-introduce-opd-+-10-percent-dispensing)
- **Sub-dermal contraceptive implants (Nexplanon)**
From 1 January 2025, GP practices will be able to order sub dermal contraceptive implants (Nexplanon) directly from the supplier and claim back the cost. The Statement of Financial Entitlements (SFE) will be published on 1 October 2024 including this change. This will mean that patients do not have to go to the pharmacy to pick up the implant themselves and then make a further GP appointment to get it fitted.
Community pharmacists should consider running down their stocks of sub-dermal implants in response to this change.
- **Propranolol in anxiety: poor evidence for efficacy and toxicity in overdose**
Article in BJGP notes propranolol is increasingly prescribed by GPs for anxiety, either taken regularly or as-needed, but many practitioners may not be aware of its toxicity in overdose or the lack of evidence for efficacy. Despite having a UK Product Licence for the treatment of anxiety symptoms it is not recommended by NICE or the British Association for Psychopharmacology (BAP) for this condition due to the paucity of evidence.
- **Are you using NICE's Patient Decision Aid (PDA) on asthma inhalers and climate change?**
NICE's Patient Decision Aid (PDA) on asthma inhalers and climate change is useful for facilitating discussions between people aged 12 and over and their healthcare professionals about the effect inhalers have on the environment, emphasising that some e.g. Dry Powder Inhalers have a much lower carbon footprint, the importance of good asthma control as well as encouraging patients to return their used inhalers to their local pharmacy when they pick up their next prescription. Some GP surgeries are utilising the PDA by sending it to patients in advance of their asthma reviews.
- **Reminder: Shingles programme and Zostavax**
The final batch of Zostavax supplied by ImmForm for the national shingles vaccination programme expired on 31 October 2024. Providers should discard any remaining stock that they have in their vaccine fridges.
Shingrix is now the only vaccine available for this programme. Individuals previously eligible for Zostavax and aged up to 79 years of age who have not yet received their shingles vaccine should now instead be offered a 2-dose course of Shingrix. Full details are included in the current Information for [Healthcare Practitioners guidance](#) and [training slide set](#).
- **Change of vaccine brand for meningococcal groups A, C, W and Y (MenACWY) vaccination**
The vaccine used for meningococcal groups A, C, W and Y (MenACWY) vaccination will change from Nimenrix® to MenQuadfi®. UKHSA expect to make MenQuadfi® vaccine available to order via ImmForm from around Monday 25 November 2024, once Nimenrix® depletes sufficiently. MenQuadfi® does not contain a needle or a syringe for administration. Guidance on the choice of needle size can be found in [chapter 4](#) of the Green Book. Needles and syringes should be obtained locally.