

To:

Chief Executive of Public Health Agency – **for distribution to:**

Director of Public Health – for cascade to:

Consultants in Public Health

Assistant Directors – for cascade to:

Nursing Teams

Allied Health Professional Teams

Chief Executives of HSC Trusts – **for distribution to:**

Medical Directors – for cascade to all relevant staff

Directors of Nursing – for cascade to all relevant staff

Heads of Pharmacy and Medicines Management –
for cascade to all relevant staff

Clinical and Social Care Governance Leads

Directors of Finance

Director of Integrated Care, HSC Board – **for distribution to:**

Assistant Directors – for cascade to:

Pharmacy and Medicines Management Team

Medical Advisers

General Medical Practices – for cascade to all
practice staff including GP locums

Community Pharmacists; and

Non-Medical Prescribers

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Web Site: www.hscboard.hscni.net

For Information:

Chief Executive, Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority

Chief Executive, Patient and Client Council

Chair, RCGP

Pharmaceutical Contractors Committee

General Practitioners Committee

Regional Medicines Information Services

NIMDTA

NICPLD

NIPEC

Permanent Secretary, DHSSPS

Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, DHSSPS

Chief Medical Officer, DHSSPS

12 August 2011

Dear Colleague

**Pharmaceutical Clinical Effectiveness – Regional Prescribing Policy –
Guidelines on the use of Antipsychotic Drugs**

The purpose of this letter is to draw your attention to the new guidelines on the use of antipsychotic drugs. The following guidance is enclosed:

- Advice on clinical use of antipsychotic drugs
- Monitoring physical health of patients receiving antipsychotic drug treatment for schizophrenia and bipolar disorder

- Guidelines for monitoring the physical health of patients receiving antipsychotic drug treatment for schizophrenia and bipolar disorder
- Side effects of antipsychotics – a guide to help you choose an antipsychotic
- Relative risks of common adverse effects of antipsychotics

The guidance has been developed by the Psychiatry Expert Group (Appendix 1) as part of the Pharmaceutical Clinical Effectiveness Programme and endorsed for HSC by the Medicines Management Forum.

The guidance has been developed in line with NICE Clinical Guideline 82 - Core interventions in the treatment and management of schizophrenia in primary and secondary care (update) (March 2009).

The guidance was developed by applying the following criteria, in strict order, to identify the most appropriate therapies:

- i. Clinical effectiveness;
- ii. Risk management with respect to medicines presentation; and
- iii. Budget impact assessment.

The aim of the resulting guidance is to recommend suitable first-line agents for approximately 70% of prescribing events.

The Psychiatry Expert Group will review emerging evidence relating to these guidelines to inform subsequent revisions of this guidance.

The guidelines are available at: <http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/medicinesmanagement/>

A number of points are drawn to your attention:

- i. The guidelines apply, where appropriate, to all new patients.
- ii. These guidelines should be promoted to junior medical staff, new prescribers and those prescribing in outpatient clinics.

This advice does not override or replace the individual responsibility of health professionals to make appropriate decisions in the circumstances of their individual patients, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer. This would, for example, include situations where individuals have other conditions or complications that need to be taken into account in determining whether these guides are fully appropriate in their case.

Action

HSC organisations and primary care practitioners should work collaboratively to implement this guidance. To this end, HSC Board Medicines Management Advisers should support GP practices to ensure implementation of this guidance.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to all those concerned for their input and effort to date and particularly to the members of the Psychiatry Expert Group.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Compton', written in a cursive style.

John Compton
Chief Executive
Health and Social Care Board

Copy to:

Dr Margaret O'Brien, Assistant Director Integrated Care
Joe Brogan, Assistant Director Integrated Care

**Membership of Regional Psychiatry Expert Group – Atypical
Antipsychotics
June 2011**

Name	Title
Dr Ruth Barr	Consultant Psychiatrist, Belfast HSC Trust
Stephen Bolan	MSD, ABPI NI Observer
Dr Neta Chada	Consultant Psychiatrist, Southern HSC Trust
Professor Stephen Cooper (Chair)	Professor of Psychiatry
Aaron Coulter	Clinical Pharmacist, Southern HSC Trust
Dr Martin Cunningham	GP, University Health Centre at Queen's, Belfast
Dr Josephine Deehan	GP, Omagh Health Centre, Omagh
Noel Dunn	Deputy Regional Procurement Pharmacist, Northern HSC Trust
Lesley Edgar	Medicines Management Information Co-ordinator, HSC Board
Dr Mark Finnerty	Consultant Psychiatrist, South Eastern HSC Trust
Noeleen Gribben	Clinical Pharmacist, Northern HSC Trust
Stephen Guy	Senior Clinical Pharmacist, Belfast HSC Trust
Lynn Keenan	Medicines Management Information Pharmacist, HSC Board
Dr Chris Kelly	Consultant Psychiatrist, Belfast HSC Trust/Honorary Senior Lecturer, QUB
Dr Patrick Manley	Consultant Psychiatrist, Western HSC Trust
Dr Michael Mannion	Consultant Psychiatrist, Northern HSC Trust
Dr Joan McGuinness	Consultant Psychiatrist, Learning Disability, Southern HSC Trust
Breda McKee	Abbott, ABPI NI Observer
Nuala McKeown/Jacqueline Hanley	Clinical/PCE Pharmacist, Northern HSC Trust
Dr George O'Neill	GP, Belfast/ Chair, Belfast Local Commissioning Group
Dr Susan Patterson	Medicines Management Adviser, HSC Board
Professor Michael Scott	Head of Pharmacy and Medicines Management, Northern HSC Trust