

**From the Chief Medical Officer
Professor Sir Michael McBride**



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

HSS(MD)38/2023

FOR ACTION

Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/HSC Trusts/NIAS
Deputy Secretary SPPG

GP Medical Advisers, SPPG

All General Practitioners and GP Locums (for onward
distribution to practice staff)

OOHs Medical Managers (for onward distribution to staff)

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST

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Our Ref: HSS(MD)38/2023

Date: 22 August 2023

Dear Colleague

**ADDENDUM to HSS(MD) 38/2023 - NATIONAL PATIENT SAFETY ALERT –
SHORTAGE OF GLP-1 RECEPTOR AGONISTS UPDATE**

A National Patient Safety Alert was issued on 18 July 2023 for all glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1 RAs) due to very limited and intermittent supplies. The supply issues have been caused by an increase in demand for these products for licensed and off-label indications. This has resulted in stocks not being expected to stabilise until at least mid-2024 to meet full market demand.

While the actions within the National Patient Safety Alert will remain in place until GLP-1 RA supplies stabilise in mid-2024, it is important that healthcare professionals are aware of current stock levels when making decisions for patients currently prescribed GLP-1 RAs for treatment of type 2 diabetes. SPS medicine supply tool is a useful link for checking shortage information for medicines and anticipated resupply dates - <https://www.sps.nhs.uk/home/tools/medicines-supply-tool/>. SPS has also produced an additional tool to provide prescribing advice on the current availability of GLP-1 RAs - <https://www.sps.nhs.uk/articles/prescribing-available-glp-1-receptor-agonists/>. These tools will be updated regularly to give a reflection of current supply figures.

Clear and open communication between healthcare professionals prescribing and dispensing these medicines while this alert is in place may also be beneficial in helping to make decisions on continuity of treatment for patients prescribed GLP-1 RAs for the treatment of type 2 diabetes.

In addition, healthcare professionals are reminded of the dangers associated with falsified medicines. Falsified medicines will not have been subject to the normal controls on manufacture and may not be of a suitable quality or be of the nature described. Therefore, during this period of supply disruption, it is important that

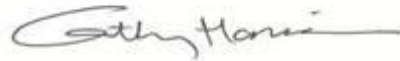
Working for a Healthier People

healthcare professionals conduct due diligence if placing an order with unknown suppliers and remind patients of the increased risks associated with obtaining medicines via unregulated routes. Any concerns can be raised to the appropriate regulatory authorities or reported to the Department of Health's Medicines Regulatory Group – counterfeit.mrg@health-ni.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely



Professor Sir Michael McBride
Chief Medical Officer



Professor Cathy Harrison
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

