



Pharmaceutical Services, 2 Franklin Street, Belfast BT2 8DQ
Telephone No. 028 95 36 0333

To: All Community Pharmacists

13th December 2024

Dear colleague

TO NOTE: This is the second of three MSNs covering discontinuations of Novo Nordisk insulin products (NovoRapid® FlexTouch®, Insulatard® Penfill® and all Levemir® presentations). A third MSN will provide clinical advice on the discontinuation of all Levemir® presentations. Clinicians should not initiate new patients on Levemir® or make any switches from Levemir® to alternative insulins at this time. It should be noted that where alternative insulin products have been recommended, consideration has been made both to these product discontinuations, and availability of other insulin products.

Medicine Supply Notification: Insulatard® (isophane insulin, human) Penfill®
100units/ml suspension for injection 3ml cartridges
Tier 2 – medium impact

[Medicines Supply Tool – SPS - Specialist Pharmacy Service – The first stop for professional medicines advice](#)

Summary

- Insulatard® (isophane insulin, human) Penfill® 100units/ml suspension for injection 3ml cartridges are being discontinued; stock is anticipated to be exhausted by June 2025.
- Humulin® I KwikPen® (isophane insulin, human) 100units/ml suspension for injection 3ml pre-filled pens are available and can support a full increase in demand from April 2025.
- Humulin® I (isophane insulin, human) 100units/ml suspension for injection 3ml cartridges are available but cannot support an increase in demand.

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Actions Required

Clinicians should:

- not initiate new patients on Insulatard® Penfill® 100units/ml suspension for injection in cartridge;
- pro-actively review all patients currently prescribed Insulatard® Penfill® 100units/ml suspension for injection in cartridges; and
 - consider switching patients to Humulin® I KwikPen® 100units/ml suspension for injection pre-filled pen from April 2025; and
 - for patients who cannot use Humulin® I KwikPen® and have no carers to support them with administration, refer to local prescribing guidelines/formularies for selection of an alternative insulin; and
- if the above options are not considered suitable; seek advice from specialist diabetes teams on management options.

Prescribers and pharmacy teams should ensure that all patients are informed of reason for the switch, counselled on the change in treatment, provided with training on use of new pen/insulin preparation, including signposting to training videos, and advised that closer monitoring of blood glucose levels are required initially, and dose may need to be adjusted if required (see Supporting information).

Supporting information

Isophane insulin, human

Onset of action is within 1½ hours, reaches a maximum effect within 4–8 hours and the entire duration of action is approximately 16 hours but ranges between 14-24 hours. It is usually administered twice daily but can be used once daily in individual circumstances.

Insulatard® Penfill®

The 3ml cartridges are compatible with NovoPen® 6 or NovoPen Echo® Plus:

- NovoPen® 6 dials up doses from 1 to 60 units in 1-unit increments.
- NovoPen Echo® Plus dials up doses from 0.5 to 30 units in 0.5-unit increments.



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Humulin® I KwikPen®

A pre-filled disposable pen injector containing a 3ml cartridge that dials up 1 unit at a time and can deliver from 1 to 60 units in a single injection.

Switching between insulin pens:

When switching to another pen, ensure patients are provided with appropriate education and training to ensure they can use the new device and administer the correct dose. As a precaution, the patient should be advised to initially monitor their glucose levels more closely. In the event of concerns with new glucose excursions (high or low glucose readings), the patient should be advised to speak to/seek advice from their specialist diabetes team.

Links to further information

[BNF – Insulin](#)

[BNF- Isophane insulin](#)

[BNF- Insulin preparations](#)

[NICE guidance: Type 1 diabetes in adults \(insulin therapy\)](#)

[NICE CKS- Insulin therapy in type 1 diabetes](#)

[NICE CKS- Insulin therapy in type 2 diabetes](#)

[SmPC- Insulatard® Penfill® 100units/ml suspension for injection in 3ml cartridges](#)

[SmPC- Humulin® I KwikPen® 100units/ml suspension for injection in pre-filled pens](#)

[User manual- Humulin® I KwikPen® 100units/ml suspension for injection in pre-filled pens](#)