



23 December 2019

Medicine Supply Alert Notice

H2-antagonists (cimetidine, famotidine and nizatidine)

Priority: Level 2*

Valid until: various, see below

Issue

1. Following supply issues affecting Ranitidine (MSAN (2019) 22, and subsequent updates), suppliers of cimetidine, famotidine and nizatidine have reported an increase in demand, which has contributed to short term shortages.
 - Famotidine 20mg tablets are out of stock until the end of December 2019.
 - Cimetidine 200mg tablets are out of stock until the end of January 2020.
 - Nizatidine 150mg and 300mg tablets are out of stock until February 2020.
2. Cimetidine 400mg and 800mg tablets, and famotidine 40mg tablets remain available.
3. It is recommended that, where possible, patients are not switched to an alternative H2-receptor antagonist in the first instance as this may exacerbate a shortage of these products. There are currently sufficient supplies of oral omeprazole to manage an increase in demand.

Advice and Actions

4. For patients without sufficient supplies of cimetidine, famotidine and nizatidine for the duration of the out of stock period, prescribers should consider the following advice:
 - Review patients to establish if ongoing treatment is still required.
 - Review patients to establish if treatment could be stepped down to an antacid or alginate.
 - If ongoing treatment is still required, then consider switching to an alternative oral treatment as set out in MSAN (2019) 22, and subsequent updates.

Enquiries

5. Any enquiries should be directed to – PharmacyTeam@gov.scot or NSS.NHSSMedicineShortages@nhs.net