



23 March 2021

## **Medicine Supply Alert Notice**

### **Irbesartan/hydrochlorothiazide 150mg/12.5mg tablets**

**Priority: Level 2\***

**Valid until: early May 2021**

#### **Issue**

1. Irbesartan/hydrochlorothiazide 150mg/12.5mg tablets are out of stock until early May 2021.
2. Irbesartan/hydrochlorothiazide 300mg/25mg tablets are unscored oval shaped tablets and not suitable for halving.
3. Of the separate components, only irbesartan 150mg tablets are available (hydrochlorothiazide tablets were discontinued many years ago) and can support an uplift in demand.
4. An alternative thiazide diuretic, bendroflumethiazide 2.5mg, is available and can support an uplift in demand.
5. A switch to separate components but using bendroflumethiazide in place of hydrochlorothiazide, is an option for patients who run out of irbesartan/hydrochlorothiazide 150mg/12.5mg tablets.

#### **Advice and Actions**

6. Where patients have insufficient supplies to last until the re-supply date, clinicians should:
  - review patients to determine if irbesartan/hydrochlorothiazide 150mg/12.5mg tablets remain the most suitable therapy;
  - consider prescribing irbesartan 150mg tablets and bendroflumethiazide 2.5mg tablets;
  - consider prescribing alternative fixed-dose antihypertensive combination product containing an angiotensin II receptor blocker with hydrochlorothiazide if the above option is not appropriate or adherence to separate components is in doubt (see additional information);
  - ensure appropriate counselling is provided if a change is made to patient's prescription; and
  - monitor patients' blood pressure within four weeks after switching product to ensure it remains controlled and treatment is tolerated.

#### **Additional Information**

7. If there is a need to consider an alternative once daily fixed-dose antihypertensive combination product, local formularies/guidance should be consulted to aid product selection. There is a lack of dose equivalence data. Based on 150mg being the starting dose of irbesartan, the following preparations contain usual starting doses of other angiotensin II receptor blockers in combination with 12.5mg hydrochlorothiazide:
  - Losartan 50mg/ hydrochlorothiazide 12.5mg
  - Valsartan 80mg/ hydrochlorothiazide 12.5mg
  - Telmisartan 40mg/ hydrochlorothiazide 12.5mg
  - Olmesartan 20mg/ hydrochlorothiazide 12.5mg
8. Please refer to guidelines from [NICE](#) on management of hypertension for further information.

9. See links below to SPCs:

- [Irbesartan 150mg / hydrochlorothiazide 12.5mg tablets SmPC](#)
- [Irbesartan 150 mg tablets SmPC](#)
- [Bendroflumethiazide 2.5mg tablets SmPC](#)

### **Enquiries**

10. Enquiries from Health Boards or healthcare professionals should be directed in the first instance to [PharmacyTeam@gov.scot](mailto:PharmacyTeam@gov.scot) (primary care) or [NSS.NHSSMedicineShortages@nhs.scot](mailto:NSS.NHSSMedicineShortages@nhs.scot) (secondary care).