

## Safer prescribing of oral amiodarone

The memo below has been sent out from the cardiology directorate to STHFT staff advising on the measures to ensure safer prescribing of amiodarone.

Prescribers in primary care are advised to note the introduction of the **transfer of care (TOC)** form and the patient held **amiodarone information booklet and passport**. The TOC form indicates that the relevant baseline tests have been done at STHFT, ensures that care is accepted by the GP and confirms when the next monitoring is due. The GP should complete section B of this form and fax back as indicated to confirm that they have accepted the patient into their monitoring service.

The amiodarone information booklet has been updated and now includes a section for recording the blood tests and any symptoms/signs of side-effects. Patients should bring the monitoring booklet to their appointments in primary care for completion.

Hilde Storkes  
Medicines Governance Pharmacist  
12/01/15

# Memo

To: All Prescribers, All Nursing staff, All Pharmacy      From: Paul Sheridan/ Saima Annett  
Cc: All Safety and Risk Management Board                      Consultant Cardiologist/ Cardiology Pharmacist  
Date: 4<sup>th</sup> December 2014

**Please read this memo if you are involved in the new or recurrent prescription of amiodarone, or discharge patients with this medication.**

## ORAL AMIODARONE

### Background

The recommendations for the safe prescription of amiodarone and 'Transfer of Care' to General Practitioners (GP) have changed following two Serious Untoward Incidents relating to pulmonary toxicity. There are approximately 1000 prescriptions for amiodarone generated each year at STHFT including around 200 new prescriptions. Of these prescriptions about 40% are created outside the cardiothoracic directorate. The actions below relate to **ALL** new prescriptions and **RECURRENT** prescriptions of amiodarone.

There are four recommendations from the Trust's Amiodarone Safer Prescribing Group:

1. A revised **Amiodarone Shared Care Protocol** outlining baseline tests and monitoring  
<http://www.intranet.sheffieldccg.nhs.uk/Downloads/Medicines%20Management/Shared%20Care%20protocols/Amiodarone%20SCP%20January%202014.pdf>
2. A new **Amiodarone Handheld Information Booklet and Passport**  
[http://nww.sth.nhs.uk/STHcontDocs/STH\\_PIM/Cardiothoracic/Cardiology/pil3105.pdf](http://nww.sth.nhs.uk/STHcontDocs/STH_PIM/Cardiothoracic/Cardiology/pil3105.pdf)  
 A small number of booklets are available in pharmacy but can be directly ordered from Xerox quoting reference PIL3105
3. An **Amiodarone advisory notice** on the E-Discharge Summary. This gives the GP information on amiodarone. It is selected from the dropdown box from 'Information Given to patient and/or Authorised person'
4. A **Transfer of Care Contract**. This is completed for newly prescriptions of amiodarone and sent to the GP. This is returned by the GP to confirm that they will take responsibility for amiodarone prescribing in accordance with the Amiodarone Shared Care Protocol.  
<http://www.intranet.sheffieldccg.nhs.uk/Downloads/Medicines%20Management/prescribing%20guidelines/Amiodarone%20transfer%20of%20care%20form%20Jan%202014.pdf>

The majority of Sheffield GP Practices have had *Electronic Protocols* installed. This means that they are alerted to patients attending clinic who have a prescription including amiodarone. This notifies them of any blood tests that have not been completed in the previous six months and if the patient has a presenting symptoms to suggest pulmonary toxicity (such as patient has a cough).

### Responsibilities of prescribers:

1. To supply an **Amiodarone Handheld Information Booklet and Passport** to patients initiating amiodarone and those with recurrent amiodarone prescriptions if they do not already have one. This is held by the patient and used by the GP to monitor follow up arrangements. The front page includes a removable label which must be stuck in the patient file as a record that the booklet has been issued.
2. To counsel the patient on amiodarone if newly initiated.
3. To carry out the baseline testing and the surveillance schedule as detailed in the **Amiodarone Shared Care Protocol**.
4. To include the **amiodarone advisory notice** on the E-Discharge summary. This is selected from the dropdown box from 'Information Given to patient and/or Authorised person'
5. To endorse on the E-Discharge summary that the patient has an **Amiodarone Handheld Information Booklet and Passport**
6. To complete and send out a '**Transfer of Care Contract**' for each patient newly prescribed on amiodarone at discharge.

### Action by nursing staff:

1. If a patient is prescribed amiodarone please ensure:
  - They have an **Amiodarone Handheld Information Booklet and Passport**

- If the amiodarone is newly prescribed the prescriber has completed and sent a **Transfer of Care Contract**
2. To advise the prescriber if any of the above have not been completed as they are the prescriber's responsibility.

### **Action by pharmacy staff:**

#### **Ward pharmacists**

1. Whilst undertaking medicine reconciliation for patients to check:
  - The patient has an **Amiodarone Handheld Information Booklet and Passport** or issue it if they do not have one
  - They are aware of how long they are on the amiodarone for
  - They have been counselled on the medication
2. To endorse the drug chart that the patient has an **Amiodarone Handheld Information Booklet and Passport**
3. To check baseline testing has been done if amiodarone is newly initiated
4. At discharge ensure the **E-Discharge summary** includes the **amiodarone advisory notice** or add it if it has been omitted.
5. Endorse that the patient has an **Amiodarone Handheld Information Booklet and Passport** and issue it if the patient does not have one.

#### **Dispensary pharmacists**

At patient discharge:

1. To provide an **Amiodarone Handheld Information Booklet** if the drug chart or E-discharge is not endorsed to say the patient already has one.
2. To ensure the **E-Discharge summary** includes the **amiodarone advisory notice** or add it if it is omitted.

It is the prescriber's responsibility to ensure the above points have been completed.