

### **Communication to primary care clinicians on the new OPAT service for oral linezolid**

**Oral linezolid preparations** are now included in the Outpatient Parenteral Antibiotic Therapy (OPAT) service for Sheffield patients, set up at STHFT.

Linezolid is indicated in adults for pneumonia and complicated skin and soft tissue infections only when the infection is known to be caused by susceptible Gram positive bacteria. Linezolid should only be initiated in hospital after consultation with a specialist such as a microbiologist or ID specialist. It is recommended that FBC should be monitored weekly in patients receiving linezolid and this becomes increasingly important with longer treatment durations. Care of the patient within the OPAT framework will help to ensure that this critical monitoring is delivered.

This service has been initiated to provide the following advantages for patients and clinicians based in the community:

- To improve clinical governance in patients treated outside of the acute in-patient setting by ensuring that patients are appropriately counselled, drug-drug interactions checked and that appropriate monitoring of FBC and adverse drug reactions is conducted;
- To help avoid patients being admitted for IV antibiotics and to ensure that patients discharged on linezolid will benefit from the prescribing and monitoring component of the linezolid OPAT service;
- To benefit from all monitoring being conducted by OPAT and to take advantage of the lower cost of linezolid at STHFT (compared with community price) and ensure that a supply is readily available (avoiding the issue of potential delayed access to a supply from community pharmacies).

#### **When should GPs refer patients?**

- Following discussion with a microbiologist where it is felt that linezolid therapy may be a viable option for the patient (limited oral antibiotic options).
- Then refer the patient to the linezolid OPAT service via the usual OPAT referral pathways (tel: 0114 271 2605).

#### **Traffic light status in Sheffield**

- Oral linezolid preparations were approved as red classified drugs within the Sheffield Traffic Light Drug List by the Sheffield Area Prescribing Group in July 2020.

### Further information for GPs

- Where oral linezolid is prescribed for a patient within the STHFT oral linezolid OPAT service, the regime (including the start and finish date where known) should be recorded as a 'specialist issued drug' on the practice clinical system.

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