

Please note that this document has not been updated for the 2026-27 incentive scheme. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for medicines optimisation switches/reviews, along with other supporting materials, were originally developed for use by Medicines Optimisation Team staff within NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB). Other organisations or groups choosing to use this resource does so at their own risk and NHS SY ICB accepts no liability for its use or application.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for switching preparations (branded **Circadin** to generic **melatonin mr 2mg tabs**)

Action(s) / Medication to be Switched	- Prescribe generic melatonin mr 2mg tabs for all new patients who require treatment with mr melatonin - Review all patients currently prescribed branded Circadin and switch, where appropriate, to generic melatonin mr 2mg tabs It is recommended that any switches/changes to medication are only made by appropriately qualified, registered and authorised HCPs.
Rationale	Generic prescribing is recognised as a sign of good practice in terms of consistency and safety, as well as generally being more cost effective. It allows any suitable generic (or equivalent branded product) to be dispensed, reduces the number of items to be held as stock in the pharmacy and can potentially reduce the delays in supplying medicines to the patient. Sometimes, the cost difference between a branded generic (BG) and generic (as listed in the DT) is so significant that in terms of cost-effectiveness, the BG is the most appropriate option to prescribe. In the circumstance regarding mr melatonin tabs, prescribing as generic melatonin mr 2mg tabs would save NHS SY (Rotherham Place) £50k vs branded Circadin

Price comparison Cost correct as per Drug Tariff and NHS List price (May 2024)			
	Drug/Appliance (Brand / Branded generic)	Strength	Cost
	Branded Circadin	2mg mr tabs	£15.39 for 30
	Generic Melatonin mr 2mg	2mg mr tabs	£2.45 for 30
Exclusions	- Patients identified as previously having difficulty accepting changes to medication regimes. (known pts to Practice) - Patients previously tried the switch with a documented reason for changing back - Patients with a documented allergy / intolerance to any excipients - Patients on the end of life/palliative care register should be switched at the discretion of their care providing GP.		
Cautions	Refer to the current BNF and SPC		

	Prescribe at same dose/frequency/quantity as previous preparation. Double-check prescribed quantity matches dose and script duration.
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New Medication Added	
Emis/S1 consultation entry	Read Code consultation entry – Drug changed to cost effective alternative (XaJKo) (SNOMED: 408374000) Consultation entry to make - • branded Circadin switched to generic melatonin mr 2mg tabs • Patient repeat template updated • Patient informed of change via SMS / letter
Follow Up	None
Communication to Patients	Preferred method of communication with patients to be agreed with individual practice. • A sample patient letter is attached on Appendix 1. • Suggested wording to include in SMS included in Appendix 2.

Appendix 1 - Example letter only

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Patient Name, Address.

Date

Dear Title Surname,

Update to your prescription for **Circadin**

Commented [G01]: Should this be 'Update to your...' ?

Along with other GP Practices across Rotherham we are reviewing patients who are currently prescribed **Circadin**. This is to ensure our patients continue to receive quality treatment but also use NHS resources in the most cost-effective manner.

You are currently prescribed **Circadin**

This treatment has been reviewed and updated to the **generic melatonin mr 2mg tabs**

Your dose remains unchanged.

Please finish your current supply of **Circadin** medication before starting your **generic melatonin mr 2mg tabs** medication.

On behalf of the Doctors

Appendix 2 - Suggested text wording

Update to Your Prescription for melatonin (Circadin)

All GP Practices across Rotherham are reviewing patients who are currently prescribed melatonin. This is to ensure our patients continue to receive quality treatment but also use NHS resources in the most cost-effective manner. Your Circadin has been updated to the generic melatonin mr 2mg tabs to save the NHS funds to use elsewhere.