

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.

Switch from Slenyto® MR (modified-release) 1mg and 5mg tablets to generic melatonin MR 2mg tablets or if appropriate to immediate release (IR) melatonin tablets (Adaflex®)

Overall outcome required: The aim is to transition patients currently prescribed Slenyto® 1mg and 5mg MR tablets (regardless of indication) to an alternative cost-effective generic melatonin tablets. Suitable patients should be identified and contacted before the switch takes place.

Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians undertaking this action sheet should work within their clinical competence. Where appropriate please read in conjunction with appropriate referenced documents and the BNF. If you are unsure, please speak to your line manager or one of the clinical leads.

Inform the line manager if any barriers to carrying out the work.

Background /Evidence base

Slenyto® (melatonin modified-release 1mg and 5mg tablets) is a licensed preparation primarily used for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or Smith-Magenis syndrome (SMS). Due to cost considerations, a switch is being proposed to a generic modified-release (MR) or immediate-release (IR) melatonin preparation, depending on its intended use, please see [Switching from Slenyto® to Immediate-Release \(IR\) Melatonin:](#)

Slenyto® was initially prescribed for all patients for whom it is licensed - specifically those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or Smith-Magenis syndrome (SMS), however, as melatonin 2mg MR tablets have been widely prescribed off-license for other patient groups, and considering the cost implications, it is now considered a viable option to transition these patients to the generic melatonin 2mg MR tablets.

NOTE: Slenyto® is currently the first-line treatment for the above patient group, for whom it is licensed, however, the current SPC [Melatonin prescribing guideline.pdf](#) is in the process of being updated to reflect that melatonin MR 2mg tablets and Adaflex® are the new first-line options.

Rationale for Switching:

Cost-effectiveness of generic MR melatonin.

Slenyto® 1mg MR tablets x 60 are £32.96

Slenyto® 5mg MR tablets x 30 are £82.40

Vs

Melatonin 2mg MR tablets x 30 are £2.69

Further information

An important consideration for the proposed switch is the difference in available tablet strengths.

Slenyto® MR tablets are available in **1mg** and **5mg** strengths, while generic **melatonin MR** tablets are only available in **2mg**. This presents challenges when switching patients who are on non-equivalent doses (e.g. 3mg, 5mg, 7mg),

The aim of this action sheet is to therefore to focus on switching patients on equal doses such as those who are on 2mg, 4mg, 6mg etc.

This switch is supported by the specialists in SCH, who are aware of the price difference in these formulations and only starting patients on Slenyto® if they cannot swallow the bigger generic melatonin tablets.

Slenyto® MR 1mg and 5mg tablets are both 3mm in diameter and smaller compared to melatonin MR 2mg tablets (**the generic is 8mm in diameter**). This is therefore the main reason why Slenyto® is prescribed and changing to a larger tablet may be an issue for younger people prescribed Slenyto®.

Switching from Slenyto to Generic Modified-Release (MR) Melatonin:

1. Identify patients currently prescribed Slenyto® and assess whether a switch is appropriate. **See exclusions.**
2. If a switch is deemed appropriate, discuss it with the patient/carer, considering factors such as swallowing difficulties and autism. Keep in mind that Slenyto® tablets are significantly smaller than generic melatonin 2mg MR tablets and will look different.

Consider sharing advice on how to swallow tablets (video and leaflet accessible): [Helping your child to swallow tablets – Medicines For Children](#)

3. If the patient is suitable for the switch, prescribe generic MR melatonin 2mg tablets at the same dose.
Explain to the patient/guardian/carer that the melatonin MR 2mg tablets should be **swallowed whole**. Crushing the tablet will stop it working as a modified release tablet.

Explain that using melatonin 2mg MR tablets is outside of the licence therefore parts of the PIL (patient information leaflet) will not be relevant e.g. states for over 18 years.

Offer reassurance that using melatonin MR 2mg tablets off-licence is supported by Sheffield Children's Hospital Sleep Clinic; if they have any questions or problems to get back in touch with their pharmacy or the surgery.

4. Some patients may not require direct contact prior to the switch; in these cases, the switch can proceed, and an information letter can be sent afterwards
5. Advise the patient to take the new medication at the same time as their previous Slenyto® dose and as with Slenyto® preferably with/after food (as there is better absorption).

Switching from Slenyto® to Immediate-Release (IR) Melatonin:

Some patients may have been instructed to crush Slenyto® to achieve an IR effect which would help with sleep initiation. In these cases, consider switching to an IR formulation such as Adaflex® or Ceyesto® liquid.

1. Confirm the clinical need for immediate-release melatonin.
2. If Slenyto® was previously crushed, switch to a licensed IR melatonin tablet (Adaflex® or Ceyesto® if a liquid formulation is required).
3. Prescribe the IR melatonin at the same dose as the crushed Slenyto® dose.

Exclusion category

Patients that have trouble swallowing the bigger melatonin 2mg MR tablets.

Autistic patients for which the difference in shape/colour/size is unacceptable.

Action required	By
1. Clinical Systems Requirement Form (Searches are not complex therefore not needed)	Pharmacist/Technician /
2. Discuss and gain agreement with the prescribing lead GP. Inform line manager if any barriers to carrying out the work.	Pharmacist / Pharmacy Technician
3. Liaise with the community pharmacy where appropriate.	Pharmacist / Pharmacy Technician
4. Carry out agreed actions and communicate to the patient in the agreed manner. (Letters: Appendix 1) Where patient resides in a care home communicate changes using communication sheet (Appendix 2).	Pharmacist / Pharmacy Technician
5. Consider patient's individual circumstances / methods of communication and appropriateness of switch for patients with language barriers / learning difficulties / dementia etc. Consider target audience for children as letters need to go to parent/guardian. Consider End of Life patients and leave medication alone where appropriate	Pharmacist / Pharmacy Technician

Appendix 1

Letter 1 – generic/brand switch to brand / generic switch

PRACTICE ADDRESS

LIST OF GPs ETC

Private and Confidential

PATIENT NAME
PATIENT ADDRESS

NHS Number:
DATE

Dear

Your doctor has agreed a change to your prescription medication

Prescribing at the practice is regularly reviewed to make sure patients are receiving the most suitable and cost-effective medication.

At the moment you take Slenyto® [strength] MR tablets - [dose]

This has been changed to **generic / or another brand** of the same medication called Melatonin 2mg MR tablets - [dose]

- The change will not affect the way your condition is managed; you will continue to be monitored by your doctor as before.
- Your next repeat prescription will be changed to **Melatonin MR tablets**. Please continue to **use your current supply of Slenyto® MR tablets** as prescribed by your doctor **until the pack is finished and you collect your new prescription**.
- The new Melatonin MR tablets should be used in exactly the same way as your old brand of medication. **Do not use both together.**
- Please read the patient information leaflet provided with the new medication.
NOTE: that the Patient Information Leaflet states the medication is for short-term treatment of insomnia in adults over 55 years. However, melatonin has been used safely and effectively 'off-licence' in children and adults under 55 for many years, and it works in the same way as Slenyto®. If you have any concerns please speak to your pharmacist.
- This letter only refers to the change to Melatonin MR tablets. All your other medication should be taken as prescribed by your GP.

If you have any concerns or notice any changes in your condition, please contact the surgery.

Yours sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXX

Pharmacy Technician / Clinical Practice Pharmacist
On behalf of the doctors at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

 **Make a difference: order wisely, waste less, dispose safely.**
Please only order the medication you need and check your supplies at home first before ordering - not every medication needs to be ordered every month. Any unwanted medication should be returned to the pharmacy for safe disposal.

Appendix 2

Care home communication.

The doctor has agreed a change to the prescription medication

Date:

GP practice:	Care home:
Change made on behalf of the doctors by:	Pharmacy Technician / Clinical Practice Pharmacist:
Patient Name / NHS number	Date of birth:
Name of Original medication:	Dose / Formulation / Strength
Name of New medication:	Dose / Formulation / strength
Precautions / additional information	

- The next repeat prescription will be changed. Please continue to use the current supply as prescribed by your doctor until the pack is finished and you collect the new prescription.
- The new medication should be used in exactly the same way as the old brand of medication. Do not use both together.
- Please read the patient information leaflet provided with the new medication.
- The change will not affect the way the condition is managed and will continue to be monitored as before.
-

Please inform the dispensing pharmacy of the change in order to remove the original item from the MAR chart to prevent duplication of medications.



Make a difference: order wisely, waste less, dispose safely.
Please only order the medication you need and check your supplies at home first before ordering - not every medication needs to be ordered every month. Any unwanted medication should be returned to the pharmacy for safe disposal.

References

NICE. BNF *Melatonin*. Available at: [Melatonin | Drugs | BNF | NICE](#) (accessed 12/6/2025)

NICE. (no date) *Melatonin*. Available at: <https://bnf.nice.org.uk/drugs/melatonin/#prescribing-and-dispensing-information> (accessed 12/6/2025)

Slenyto 1 mg prolonged-release tablets - Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC)

Electronic Medicines Compendium (emc). (no date) *Slenyto 1 mg prolonged-release tablets - Summary of Product Characteristics*. Available at: [Slenyto 1 mg prolonged-release tablets - Summary of Product Characteristics \(SmPC\) - \(emc\) | 10023](#) (accessed 12/6/2025)

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Electronic Medicines Compendium (emc). Adaflex *Search Results*. Available at: [Search Results - \(emc\)](#) (accessed 12/6/2025)

Ceyesto 1mg/ml Oral Solution - Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC)

Electronic Medicines Compendium (emc). (no date) *Ceyesto 1mg/ml Oral Solution - Summary of Product Characteristics*. Available at: [Ceyesto 1mg/ml Oral Solution - Summary of Product Characteristics \(SmPC\) - \(emc\) | 15067](#) (accessed 12/6/2025)

Sheffield CCG Intranet Melatonin_prescribing_guideline [Melatonin_prescribing_guideline.pdf](#) (accessed 12/6/2025)

Medicines for Children (no date) *Helping your child to swallow tablets*. Available at: [Helping your child to swallow tablets – Medicines For Children](#) (accessed 12/6/2025)

Appendices

1. Letter
2. Care Home communication form