

Care

To:

Trust Chief Executives
(for onward cascade as per the attached
Distribution list)
All GP Practices
cc Diabetes Network
All Community Pharmacists
GP Federation Pharmacy Lead

Directorate of Integrated

Western Office

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20th July 2021

Dear Colleague,

Freestyle Libre

FreeStyle Libre 1[®], a flash glucose monitoring system which can be used to aid the management of diabetes, has been available since late 2017. In December 2017 a [pathway](#) was agreed with clinicians and Diabetes UK NI for the Managed Access of FreeStyle Libre[®] in N.Ireland. Over 7,500 people living with Type 1 diabetes in Northern Ireland are currently prescribed FreeStyle Libre[®]

The purpose of this letter is to remind Trust diabetes teams and primary care teams of the following in relation to the use of FreeStyle Libre[®]:

Pathway

Trusts are responsible for using this pathway to assess if a patient with **Type 1 diabetes** is eligible to receive Freestyle Libre[®] on prescription. If the patient is eligible, Trust staff will write to the patient's GP who will then prescribe the sensors in Primary Care.

In recent weeks we have become aware of an increase in requests from Trust staff to prescribe FreeStyle Libre[®] for patients with Type 2 diabetes.

We would like to remind both Trusts and primary care prescribers **that this is outside the current pathway for Freestyle Libre[®].**

As you will be aware the Primary Care prescribing budget is under severe pressure this financial year. Freestyle Libre® for patients with Type 2 diabetes is **not** commissioned in Primary Care. Therefore:

- Trusts should not request GP practices to issue prescriptions for Freestyle Libre® sensors to patients living with Type 2 diabetes.
- GP practices should query any such recommendation to prescribe from secondary care and prescriptions should not be issued.

- If there are repeated requests, GP practices should contact their local HSCB Pharmacy Adviser and this will be raised directly with the relevant Trust.

Alcohol wipes

Since March 2021, Abbott have confirmed that unfortunately they are no longer able to supply alcohol wipes with Freestyle Libre® sensors.

As alcohol wipes are readily available to purchase at minimal cost to patients from pharmacies or other retailers, we are advising that GP practices **not to prescribe alcohol wipes**. Patients should be directed by both Trust and GP staff to purchase them.

Please note that the instructions for sensor application remain the same; wash the area with a plain soap (non-moisturising and fragrance free) and dry, clean with an alcohol wipe to remove any oily residue that may prevent the sensor from sticking properly, and allow the skin to fully dry before applying the sensor.

Change to FreeStyle Libre 2®

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank both GP practices and community pharmacists for their assistance with the recent changeover of FreeStyle Libre® sensors to the new FreeStyle Libre 2® version. To date the vast majority of patients in N.Ireland have had their prescription amended to FreeStyle Libre 2®. I appreciate that this changeover has been additional workload, particularly for GP practices and I wish to thank you for enabling patients to gain access to this new technology in a timely manner.

If you have any queries on this letter, please contact HSCB Pharmacy Adviser,

Breege Brogan (breege.brogan@hscni.net)

Yours sincerely,
Joe Brogan



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