1 Reason for the review

Clintas Carbomer® gel and VitA-POS® eye ointment are the formulary preferred choices for the symptomatic relief of dry eye or tear deficiency in NHS D&G.

Most multiple use dry preparations contain preservatives many of which cause sensitization. The formulary products have been selected because their preservatives are better tolerated by patients and because they are more cost-effective.

Clintas Carbomer contains carbomer 980 0.2%. It should be prescribed by brand. It is prescribed as “1 drop into affected eye(s) three to four times daily.”

VitA-POS preservative-free ophthalmic ointment contains retinol, liquid paraffin and wool fat. It is usually used at night; “Apply to affected eye(s) once daily at night”. It can be used for up to 3 months after first opening.

2 Inclusion Criteria

All patients who have one or more of the following dry eye preparations on their repeat medication list.

For potential change to Clintas Carbomer®:
- Carbomer 980
- Carbomer 974
- Artelac Nighttime Gel®
- GelTears®
- Liposic®
- Liquivisc®
- Lumecare Carbomer®
- Viscotears®

For potential change to VitA-POS®
- Lacri-lube®
- Simple Eye Ointment®

*Patients prescribed preservative-free single dose products may still be eligible to try a formulary preparation. Each patient should be assessed individually. Patients may be telephoned to discuss if necessary.

3 Exclusion Criteria

- Patients with terminal cancer
- Patients receiving palliative care
- Patients under 16
- Patients who are resistant to change
- Patients who have unsuccessfully tried the formulary choices before

4 Preparation and planning

Implementation of the audit in selected GP practices by the Prescribing Support Team is as follows:
- Protocol to be discussed with all GPs in the practice to ensure that agreement to proceed is reached
• Computer search of all patients according to the inclusion criteria
• Review of patients medical notes and repeat prescribing records (with particular attention to previous allergies/intolerances and ophthalmology letters)
• A list produced of patients prescribed a dry eye preparation
• List of eligible patients to be checked by GP(s)
• Letters or ‘phone calls to eligible patients (see below) and medication altered accordingly

5 Action/Good Practice

• With the prior agreement of the GP practice, patients changed from generic carbomer prescriptions to “Clinitas Carbomer” may have their repeat record amended without being contacted by phone or letter.
• Patients eligible for a change from one brand to another should be phoned in the first instance to discuss the change. Where patients cannot be contacted, a letter can be sent (Appendix 1). Alternatively, where it can be arranged, notification of the change may be made to the patient by the community pharmacist who can supply a short explanation sheet (Appendix 2) when the new prescription is first dispensed. For the latter to work, practice staff will need to be aware that they should supply Clinitas Carbomer when the patient has requested Viscotears (for example) as the patient would not yet know of the change.
• Admin. staff in practices to be made aware of the review.
• Community pharmacies to be informed of the potential changes to patients medication prior to starting the review
• Any changes which involve patients in care homes to be communicated with the manager and where required the next of kin.
• Report for practices will include number of stops made by the pharmacist/technician and projected cost savings as a result of the recommendations.

6 Costings

• Clinitas Carbomer® 10g £1.49
• Carbomer 980
• Carbomer 974 10g £4.50
• Artelac Nighttime Gel® 10g £2.96
• GelTears® 10g £2.80
• Liposic® 10g £2.96
• Liquivisc® 10g £4.50
• Lumecare Carbomer 10g £2.10
• Viscotears® £1.59
• Viscotears Single Dose 30UDVs £5.42
• VitA-POS® 5g £2.75
• Lacri-lube® 5g £3.32
• Simple Eye Ointment® 4g £3.32

References:
1. MIMs January 2013

Review to be undertaken by: GP Authorisation: Date:
## Dry Eye Formulary Review - Data Collection Sheet

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Appendix 1: Patient letters

Dear Mr/Mrs __________

As part of a review in prescribing NHS Dumfries and Galloway is currently reviewing all patients who receive regular prescriptions for dry eye preparations.

The next time you request Viscotears® you will notice we have changed your prescription to Clinitas Carbomer® brand. Both preparations contain carbomer to soothe dry eyes.

This change has been made to help doctors to continue to use high quality treatments while making the most effective use of available resources.

We propose to introduce the change with your next prescription. Please finish your current preparation as normal.

Should you have any queries, please contact the Surgery on the number above or, alternatively, you can contact a member of the Prescribing Support Team on XXXX.

Yours sincerely,
Prescribing Support Technician/Pharmacist on behalf of your Doctor

Patient name
Address

Dear Mr/Mrs __________

As part of a review in prescribing NHS Dumfries and Galloway is currently reviewing all patients who receive regular prescriptions for dry eye preparations.

The next time you request Simple Eye Ointment®/LacriLube® you will notice we have changed your prescription to VitA-POS® ointment. Both preparations contain paraffins to soothe dry eyes. VitA-POS doesn’t contain any preservatives so may be gentler on your eye. Each tube can be used for up to 3 months once open.

This change has been made to help doctors to continue to use high quality treatments while making the most effective use of available resources.

We propose to introduce the change with your next prescription. Please finish your current preparation as normal.

Should you have any queries, please contact the Surgery on the number above or, alternatively, you can contact a member of the Prescribing Support Team on XXXX.

Yours sincerely,
Prescribing Support Technician/Pharmacist on behalf of your Doctor
Appendix 2: Community Pharmacy notes for patients

Dear Patient,

As part of a review in prescribing NHS Dumfries and Galloway is currently reviewing all patients who receive regular prescriptions for dry eye preparations.

If your prescription was for Viscotears/Carbomer 980/Carbomer 974/Artelac Nighttime Gel®/GelTears®/Liposic®/Liquivisc® or Viscotears®, it has been replaced with Clinitas Carbomer. All of these preparations contain carbomer to soothe dry eyes.

If your prescription was for Simple Eye Ointment® or LacriLube®, it has been replaced with VitA-POS® ointment. All of these preparations contain paraffins to soothe dry eyes. VitA-POS doesn’t contain any preservatives so may be gentler on your eye. Each tube can be used for up to 3 months once open.

These changes have been made to help doctors to continue to use high quality treatments while making the most effective use of available resources. Should you have any queries, please contact a member of the Prescribing Support Team on XXX.