Area Drug and Therapeutics Committee
Policy Statement
Prescribing of Branded Generics

1.0 Introduction

The ADTC is constituted to provide advice to NHS Lothian on Medicines Governance. Prescribing in NHS Lothian is supported by the Lothian Joint Formulary through governance by the Formulary Committee.

A generic is a pharmaceutical product that is produced when the patient on the original medicinal product has expired. It is bioequivalent to the original patented reference product and is labelled with an approved name.¹

Some generic medicines have been given a brand name by the manufacturer for marketing reasons; these products are referred to as ‘branded generics’. List prices for branded generics may be lower than the list price for equivalent generics. However, these savings may be unsustainable by the manufacturer and may not necessarily be cheaper, or in the best interests of the NHS overall, than prescribing a generic product with a more expensive reimbursement price. This is due, among other things, to the larger discount generally offered to dispensers on the average generic medicine.²

ADTC confirmed in 2007³ that it did not endorse the prescribing of branded generics as they may be associated with associated financial and clinical risks due to potential product switching and there may be reduced prescriber and patient confidence with subsequent detrimental clinical outcomes.

Combined oral contraceptives are considered to be an exception. As these products contain multiple ingredients, there is not an established way of describing them generically, and there can be variation in description of content on packaging or within prescribing literature of these preparations, there is risk in asking for them to be prescribed generically. Therefore it is advised that these are prescribed by brand name.²

1.1 Aim of Policy Statement

To ensure that the ADTC, its subgroups and individual prescribers are aware of this policy statement.

1.2 Objectives

1.2.1 To recommend that medicines are not prescribed using branded generic terms.
1.2.2 To recommend that combined oral contraceptives are out with this rule and are prescribed by brand name.
1.3 **Scope**

This policy statement applies to recommendations made in the Lothian Joint Formulary (LJF) and to individual prescribers.

2.0 **Roles and Responsibilities**

2.1 **NHS Lothian**

NHS Lothian is responsible for establishing, documenting and maintaining an effective system to manage medicines safely to meet patients’ clinical needs.

2.2 **ADTC and its subcommittees**

The ADTC, and its subgroups work together to provide advice to attain Medicine Governance. This policy statement should be adhered to when reviewing proposals and making prescribing recommendations.

2.3 **Individuals**

Doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals have a responsibility to ensure safe and effective prescribing and to support best patient care.

**References**


