



THE IMPACT OF A CCG WIDE INSULIN PEN NEEDLE PRESCRIBING REVIEW

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CASE STUDY

NHS Isle of Wight CCG partnered with Interface Clinical Services Ltd to improve the prescribing of pen needles within the CCG population.

A case study from Isle of Wight CCG demonstrates how updated guidelines can be adopted and efficiency savings realised within pen needle prescribing. NHS Isle of Wight CCG serves 141,000 patients across 16 GP practices.¹

Upon completion of the project, an estimated annualised cost saving of £44,000 was achieved.² In addition, 624 patients were transitioned on to 4mm needles meaning that 94% of patients were using the recommended needles at the end of the project.²

In 2017, the cost of prescriptions dispensed in the community was £9.17 billion.³ This cost coupled with finite resources means that it is important the NHS achieves the greatest value from the money it spends.

In November 2018 'Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: an update and a consultation on further guidance for CCGs' was published.⁴ It was identified that across England there is a significant variation in prescribing trends and eight recommendations were made for CCGs.

These recommendations included actions to be taken for needles for pre-filled and reusable insulin pens:

- Advise CCGs that prescribers in primary care should not initiate insulin pen needles that cost >£5 per 100 needles for any new diabetes patient.
- Advise CCGs to support prescribers in deprescribing insulin pen needles that cost >£5 per 100 needles and, where appropriate ensure the availability of relevant services to facilitate this change.

In addition, the Forum for Injection Technique (FIT) UK considers the 4mm needle to be the safest pen needle for adults and children regardless of age, gender and Body Mass Index (BMI).⁵

Using needles of a shorter length helps to prevent intramuscular injection of insulin. (IM injection of insulin should be avoided as it can result in unpredictable blood glucose levels).

Therefore needle choice should be the most cost effective 4mm needle.⁴

£44,000

estimated total annualised CCG savings²

94%

of patients using 4mm needle size
(58% pre review)²



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN INSULIN PEN NEEDLE PRESCRIBING REVIEW

CASE STUDY

A consultation was undertaken by the medicines optimisation team led by David France (in conjunction with the diabetes team at Isle of Wight NHS Trust) in order to reduce spend on insulin pen needles.

This involved:

- › Selecting a shortlist of low cost pen needles
- › Inviting a sample of people living with diabetes on the island to try each, rating for ease of use and comfort

Once the Isle of Wight prescribing formulary was updated, the CCG partnered with Interface Clinical Services to support adoption of this formulary.

Working largely at primary care level, Interface Clinical Services is the leading independent provider of clinical support across the UK. With a national team of Clinical Pharmacists, Interface work alongside the NHS and industry partners to support the management of long term conditions.

The team at Interface worked with 15 of the 16 practices and:

- › Stratified the practice population
- › Identified all patients currently using/ requiring insulin pen needles
- › Presented this information to the authorising clinician, with a pre-review report
- › Assessed each patient for suitability for transition to formulary needle and implemented change
- › Communicated transition with each patient via letter
- › Provided the practice with a post-review report, demonstrating the impact of the project.



The process that Interface followed to identify, collect data and review our prescribing was seamless. I didn't have to run searches, swap product or even send out letters which saved me time that I utilised to conduct

Polypharmacy reviews as well as other clinical tasks. It was a great help to both the practice and our patients.

FRANCISCO ALVAREZ
PRACTICE PHARMACIST

REFERENCES

1. www.iow.gov.uk
2. Interface Clinical Services post review outcome data. Savings estimated through extrapolation of data from 12 practices complete as of May 2019.
3. NHS Digital Prescription Cost Analysis 2017
4. Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: an update and a consultation on further guidance for CCGs. November 2018.
5. FIT UK Forum for Injection Technique UK: The UK Injection and Infusion Technique Recommendations 4th Edition. October 2016.
6. Data from 12 out of 16 practices completed as of May 2019.

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