

PRESCRIBING OF NEEDLES FOR PRE-FILLED AND REUSABLE INSULIN PENS JOINT STATEMENT BETWEEN PRIMARY, COMMUNITY AND SECONDARY CARE

Recommendation on Pen Needles:

- Cost-effective pen needles **cost less than £4 for 100**. Needles costing more than £4 for 100 are not recommended for prescribing. (See appendix 1 overleaf for list of approved brands)
- Patients who are on needles that cost more than £4 per 100 should be switched to a cost-effective brand.
- Clinicians from the two acute Hertfordshire NHS Trusts, Hertfordshire Integrated Diabetes Service and Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust who have extensive clinical experience in using pen needles recommend the use of
 - BD Viva® or Tricare® brands (Herts Valleys CCG)
 - BD Viva® (East and North Hertfordshire CCG)
- NHS England guidance¹ approved cost effective brands are pen needles that cost less than £5 per 100.
- 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).² Using needles of a shorter length helps to prevent intramuscular (IM) injection of insulin. IM injection of insulin should be avoided as it can result in unpredicted blood glucose levels and severe hypoglycaemia.
- For patients currently using longer pen needle lengths (8mm, 12mm), it is advisable to change to a shorter needle length (6mm or less) but only after discussion with a healthcare professional, to ensure they receive advice on the correct injection technique.
- If leakage of insulin occurs with shorter needles, injection technique should be reviewed.
- Pen needles come with a universal fit and therefore the listed pen needles are compatible with all major insulin delivery pen devices currently available.
- All needles are for single use only.

Safe Disposal of Sharps:

- Ensure patients are educated about the safe disposal of needles via a sharps bin.
- Sharps bins and needle clipping devices can be prescribed on FP10.
- Sharpsguard yellow 1 litre / Sharpsafe yellow 1 litre are suitable for insulin needles (and lancets)
- Patients are advised to contact their local council to arrange collection:

Council	Telephone No.	Council	Telephone No.
Broxbourne	01992 785555	St Albans	01727 866100
Dacorum	01442 228000	Stevenage	01438 242242
East Herts	01279 655261	Three Rivers	01923 776611
Hertsmere	020 8207 2277	Watford	01923 226400
North Hertfordshire	01462 474000	Welwyn Hatfield	01707 357000

References:

1. NHSE: Items which should not be routinely prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs. Version 2, June 2019. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/items-which-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-v2.1.pdf>
2. The UK Injection and Infusion Technique Recommendations. FIT UK Forum for Injection Technique UK. 4th Edition. October 2016. Available from: http://fit4diabetes.com/files/4514/7946/3482/FIT_UK_Recommendations_4th_Edition.pdf

Appendix 1

Approved Needles for Pre-filled and Reusable Pen Injectors (Prices based on Drug Tariff – Jan 2020)

Appliance	Size/Gauge	Cost/100
Microdot Max	4mm/32g 6mm/31g	£2.74
Carefine	4mm/32g 5mm/31g 6mm/31g	£2.75
Glucorx CarePoint	4mm/31g 5mm/31g 6mm/31g 8mm/31g** 10mm/29g** 12mm/29g**	£2.75
Glucorx CarePoint Ultra	4mm/32g	£2.75
Mylife Penfine Classic	4mm/32g 5mm/31g 6mm/32g 8mm/31g**	£3.55
PROFine	4mm/32g 5mm/31g 6mm/31g 8mm/31g** 12mm/29g**	£3.80
Tricare*	4mm/32g 5mm/31g 6mm/31g 8mm/31g**	£3.95
4SURE	4mm/31g 4mm/32g 5mm/31g 5mm/32g 6mm/31g 6mm/32g 8mm/31g**	£3.95
BD Viva*	4mm/32g 5mm/31g 6mm/31g 8mm/31g**	£3.99 (Available as a pack of 90 at £3.59)

*Locally Preferred choices (BD Viva or Tricare for Herts Valleys CCG. BD Viva for East and North Hertfordshire CCG)

** Review patients who are using needles that are 8mm or longer and change to shorter needle length where appropriate