**HERTFORDSHIRE MEDICINES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (HMMC)**

**TOPICAL DILTIAZEM 2% FOR THE TREATMENT OF CHRONIC ANAL FISSURES**

**GREEN – RECOMMENDED FOR USE IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CARE** in line with the treatment pathway for anal fissures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: generic (trade)</th>
<th>What it is</th>
<th>Indication</th>
<th>Date decision last revised</th>
<th>Decision status</th>
<th>NICE / SMC Guidance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diltiazem 2% topical</td>
<td>Smooth muscle relaxant</td>
<td>Unlicensed product used to treat anal fissures</td>
<td>June 2013. Updated with new costings December 2017</td>
<td>Final</td>
<td>NICE – ESUOM3 evidence summary SMC – No guidance</td>
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**HMMC Recommendation:**

Recommended **FOR RESTRICTED USE** as a treatment option for adult patients with anal fissures, where 1st and 2nd line management options recommended in the treatment pathway below, including topical glyceryl trinitrate (GTN) ointment, have not achieved anal fissure healing or have not been tolerated. See also the HMMC treatment pathway for management of anal fissures.

Use the most cost effective preparation – in primary care, this is currently diltiazem 2% ointment. Patients prescribed diltiazem 2% cream in secondary care can be switched to diltiazem 2% ointment in primary care, where appropriate.

**Efficacy**
- Similar efficacy to topical GTN and botulinum toxin
- Less effective than surgical options, but less adverse effects than surgical options (incontinence)

**Safety**
- Main side effects reported are mild headache, perianal itching and perianal dermatitis.
- Better tolerated than topical GTN.

**Cost**
Diltiazem 2% cream has a list price in the Drug Tariff of £61.96/30g.
Diltiazem 2% ointment has a list price in the Drug Tariff of £30.89/30g

Correct November 2017

**Patient Factors**
 Extends topical treatment options which may mean that more invasive procedures can be avoided.

Diltiazem preparations for topical use are unlicensed products. Patients must be informed of this and consent obtained.

**Assessment against Ethical Framework**

**Evidence of effectiveness and safety**
- Diltiazem 2% applied topically twice daily to anal fissures, for up to 8 weeks, works by reducing intracellular calcium in smooth muscle, relaxing the internal anal sphincter.
- Studies included in a Cochrane review (2012) show superiority of topical diltiazem to placebo (80% vs 33% healing in 8 weeks respectively), and similar efficacy to topical glyceryl trinitrate, but with reduced frequency of adverse effects.
- None of the studies included compared topical diltiazem 2% with the licensed 0.4% strength of glyceryl trinitrate.
- Diltiazem has a different mode of action to glyceryl trinitrate so may be effective for patients in whom glyceryl trinitrate has failed.
- A randomised controlled trial showed that the efficacy of topical diltiazem was not significantly different to botulinum toxin.
- Two randomised controlled trials showed that diltiazem topical was less effective than surgical sphincterectomy, but no statistical analysis was performed.
- Surgical options for treating chronic anal fissures (lateral internal sphincterectomy and fissurectomy) are significantly more effective than all of the medical options. However, as the surgical options are associated with an increased risk of irreversible incontinence, they are usually only tried after medical options have been exhausted.
- The side effects reported with 2% diltiazem topical are mild headache, perianal itching and perianal dermatitis. The reports of headaches are less with diltiazem than with glyceryl trinitrate ointment.

**Cost of treatment and cost-effectiveness**
- Diltiazem 2% cream 30g has a list price of £61.96, diltiazem 2% ointment 30g has a list price of £30.89 (Part VIIIB Drug Tariff, November 2017). Historically, charges for unlicensed products such as diltiazem 2% topical could vary enormously in the community. **Diltiazem 2% cream and ointment** are now listed at a fixed price in part VIIIB of the Drug Tariff. **It is recommended that topical diltiazem is prescribed in the most cost-effective way.**
- Glyceryl Trinitrate 0.4% ointment (Rectogesic®) has a Drug Tariff price of £39.30
- The cost of botulinum toxin is approximately £138 for 100 units (Botox® brand). There will be an associated activity cost for administration.
- There are no studies on cost-effectiveness.

**The needs of the population**
The needs of the population appear to be low as there are alternative treatment options available.

**The needs of the community**
The needs of the community appear to be low as usage is low.

**Equity**
No impact anticipated

**Policy Drivers**
- The Association of Coloproctology of Great Britain and Ireland states a preference for topical diltiazem over GTN as it has similar efficacy to glyceryl trinitrate but a lower incidence of side effects.
- Local Trusts have diltiazem 2% topical on their respective formularies.
- A clear local treatment pathway for anal fissures may reduce referrals to secondary care for management.
- NICE published an unlicensed, off-label medicines evidence summary for diltiazem 2% topical in January 2013.

**Implementability**
No issues identified

**References**
- NICE evidence summary: unlicensed or off-label medicines – 22 January 2013  
- How effective are topical calcium-channel blockers for anal fissure?, Medicines Q and A, West Midlands Medicines Information Service– 26 March 2013