



Prescribing of generic and branded latanoprost

Latanoprost is the most commonly prescribed prostaglandin antagonist prescribed for glaucoma management (approx. 40% of topical glaucoma treatment in England).

In Northamptonshire, in the 12 months to March 2014 25,700 prescriptions for generic latanoprost cost £61,855 (average cost per item = £2.41) and 1,170 prescriptions for Xalatan cost £24,446 (average cost per item = £14.30).

If 80% of these branded scripts were for the generic product instead this would save over £16K pa.

In the 12 months to March 2014 2,734 prescriptions for generic latanoprost/timolol cost £16,895 (average cost per item = £6.21) and 544 prescriptions for Xalacom cost £9,235 (average cost per item = £16.98).

If 80% of these branded scripts were for the generic product instead this would save over £5K pa.

Concerns have been raised regarding the use of generic latanoprost and that it may not be as effective as the branded Xalatan®. These concerns include:

- Lack of intraocular pressure control
- Reduced compliance

National guidance

- Royal College Ophthalmologists May 2013 state that prescribers can be confident that the contents of generic latanoprost bottles will be similar so bioavailability will be similar.
- NICE clinical guidelines CG85 Glaucoma: diagnosis and management of chronic open angle glaucoma and ocular hypertension. April 2009.

These were issued prior to the end of the Xalatan patent so do not issue recommendations for generic prescribing, however a guideline review was made in August 2012 recognising the availability of generic PGA and the need to update the full guideline. This has not yet been done.

The MHRA has not received an increase in yellow card reports for the 16months after the introduction of generic latanoprost compared with the preceding 16months.

Action for Ophthalmologists

The IOP is monitored in clinic. The target IOP is individual to the patient depending on the stage of the glaucoma, age etc.

If a patient is prescribed branded Xalatan® and needs to be continued on it due to unstable changes in IOP or compliance issues, the clinic letter will state to the GP to continue on branded Xalatan® and give the reason for this.

Action for GPs

GPs should continue Xalatan® prescribing by brand if directed by the Consultant Ophthalmologist with a specified reason. In all other patients, generic latanoprost can be prescribed.

Action for community pharmacists

Ensure patients are counselled on their new generic latanoprost including that the bottle may be different and that the product may feel different on administration. Ensure they are able to open the bottle and use the product, offer them compliance aids if appropriate.

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