Use of combination inhalers in COPD

Only three combination inhalers are licensed for use in COPD patients in following dosages. None of which are available as a metered dose inhaler.

- Budesonide/formoterol turbohaler (Symbicort 400/12) 1 actuation bd (60 dose)
- Budesonide/formoterol turbohaler (Symbicort 200/6) 2 actuations bd (120 dose)
- Salmeterol/fluticasone 50/500 accuhaler (Seretide) 1 actuation bd (60 dose)

Seretide Evohalers are often incorrectly prescribed in COPD and should be changed to a licensed product wherever possible.

Choosing Symbicort first-line also reduces the steroid burden when compared to Seretide Accuhaler and reduces the risk of pneumonia, diabetes and adrenal suppression. However, stepping down the dose of steroid in COPD is not recommended.

This change must be carried out in a nurse clinic where inspiratory flow can be measured. Inhaler technique, manual dexterity and patient preference must also be assessed before switching to ensure concordance with therapy.

**Seretide Evohaler**
- 250mcg
- 2 puffs bd
  (equivalent to 2000mcg BDP)
- Cost £773 per year

**Seretide accuhaler**
- 500mcg
- 1 puff bd
  (equivalent to 2000mcg BDP)
- Cost £534 per year

Changing from Seretide Evohaler ensures patients are prescribed a licensed medication but also saves £239 per patient per year.

Patients receiving Seretide Accuhalers should also be provided with a Steroid Warning Card.

Steroid treatment cards should be routinely provided for patients who require prolonged treatment with high doses of inhaled steroids. Steroid cards are available for purchase from: 3M Security Print and Systems Limited, Gorse Street, Chadderton, Oldham OL9 9QH ☑️ 0845 610 1112 (pack 100 = 71p inc P&P).

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