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3rd February 2022

Circular 004/22

Treatment of Dry Eye Syndrome

Dear Optometrist / Ophthalmologist,

Please find enclosed a communication from Prof Michael Barry, Clinical Lead of the HSE Medicines Management Programme (MMP) in relation to the treatment of dry eye syndrome.

Further information on these initiatives is available on the MMP website at www.hse.ie/yourmedicines.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Shaun Flanagan'.

Shaun Flanagan
Primary Care Eligibility & Reimbursement



Re: Treatment of dry eye syndrome

25th January 2022

Dear Colleagues,

The purpose of this letter is to update you on a recent HSE-Medicines Management Programme (MMP) initiative.

Treatment of Dry Eye Syndrome

The MMP has completed a review of the treatments for dry eye syndrome (DES). Total expenditure on the Community Drug Schemes on topical treatments available over the counter for DES was €11.25 million in 2020. The MMP has published a Prescribing and Cost Guidance document and associated Tips and Tools, which recommend first-line treatment options based on clinical evidence and cost, and are intended to promote best practice and aid appropriate prescribing in this therapeutic area.

The MMP recommends the following prescribing considerations:

- Consider precipitating factors of DES before prescribing ocular lubricants e.g. medication use, allergy, infection, screen time.
- MMP first-line treatment options should be considered initially when prescribing for people with DES.
- First-line treatment options should be trialled for 6-8 weeks prior to assessing benefit.
- All pharmacological treatments should be used in conjunction with lifestyle advice.
- Choose the best-value preparation and prescribe by BRAND name.
- Some preparations have up to six months in-use expiry. Do not prescribe these on a monthly basis without checking the individual patient's requirement.

Please refer to the attached Tips and Tools for further recommendation and advice.

Documents relating to this review are also available on the MMP website in the sections entitled *Prescribing and Cost Guidance* and *Tips and Tools*.

Further information on this initiative, and others, are available on the MMP website (www.hse.ie/yourmedicines).

My thanks for your ongoing support in promoting safe, effective and cost-effective prescribing.

With best wishes,

Professor Michael Barry
National Clinical Lead, Medicines Management Programme. www.hse.ie/yourmedicines

First-line treatment options should be considered when prescribing for people with DES.

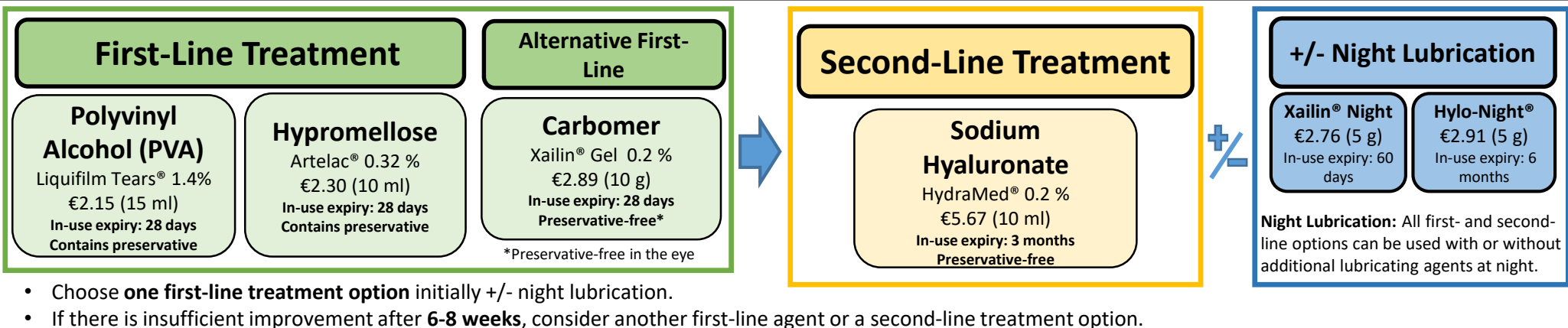
First-line treatment options are considered the BEST-VALUE preparation by the Medicines Management Programme (MMP).

Products listed on this page are examples of the best-value option, per category listed. Full evaluation report is available at: www.hse.ie/yourmedicines. For a full list of reimbursed items and for further information see overleaf. Costs refers to the reimbursed cost of the eye preparation as listed on the HSE PCRS website (www.pcrs.ie). The prices listed do not include mark-up or dispensing fees that private/Drugs Payment scheme patients may be charged.

Prescribing Considerations

- ✓ **First-line treatment options** should be considered initially when prescribing for people with DES.
- ✓ All pharmacological treatments should be used in conjunction with **lifestyle advice**.
- ✓ Choose the **BEST-VALUE** preparation and prescribe by **BRAND** name.
- ✓ Some preparations have up to six months in-use expiry. Do not prescribe these on a monthly-basis without checking the **patient's requirement**.

Abbreviations: DDU: Daily dose units; DES: Dry eye syndrome; MMP: Medicines Management Programme; PVA: Polyvinyl alcohol; SDU: Single dose units



- Choose **one first-line treatment option** initially +/- night lubrication.
- If there is insufficient improvement after **6-8 weeks**, consider another first-line agent or a second-line treatment option.

First-Line Treatment Information

- All recommended first-line treatments are multi-dose preparations.
 - Hypromellose may require more frequent administration than carbomer or PVA but may be better tolerated due to **lower viscosity**.
- * Xailin® gel is a first-line option for those requiring **preservative-free treatment**. It contains sodium perborate which is a preservative that disappears upon contact with the eye. Contact lenses must be removed prior to use.

Practice Point

Only consider **preservative-free** preparations first-line where the patient:

- has a true preservative allergy,
- has evidence of epithelial toxicity to the preservatives contained in the preparation,
- needs to use more than six applications of eye drops daily over a prolonged period of time,
- wears contact lenses,
- uses multiple eye products.



Daily Dose Unit (DDU) / Single Dose Unit (SDU)

DDU/SDU preparations are individual dosing units. A DDU is designed for multiple dose administrations within 12 hours, whilst SDUs are for single use only. Due to the high acquisition cost of DDU/SDU products compared to multi-dose alternatives, particularly for more frequent dosing, prescribing should be reserved for circumstances where:

- there are no alternative preparations available,
- the patient has dexterity issues,
- inpatient hospital use (consider multi-dose alternative for discharge).

DDU	SDU		
Sodium Hyaluronate HydraMed® 0.2 % €5.67 (0.5 ml DDU x 30) In-use expiry: 12 hours	Carmellose Carmellose sodium (Alissa) 0.50 % €3.50 (0.4 ml SDU x 30) In-use expiry: single use	Carmellose Celluvisc 0.50 % €3.89 (0.4 ml SDU x 30) In-use expiry: single use	Carmellose Xailin® Fresh 0.50 % €3.50 (0.4 ml SDU x 30) In-use expiry: single use

Eye drop preparations for dry eye syndrome (DES) reimbursed on the community drug schemes

First-Line Treatment Options: PVA, Hypromellose or Carbomer

Note: Carbomer and PVA may require less frequent administration but may be less well tolerated than hypromellose.

Best-value options highlighted in each category

Suitable for use with contact lenses

Carbomer

Note: All of these preparations contain a preservative, however Xailin® Gel* can be considered as a preservative-free alternative as it contains sodium perborate which is a preservative that disappears upon contact with the eye.

Hypromellose

Polyvinyl Alcohol

Brand: Gel Tears® Strength: 0.20 % Pack size: 10 g In-use expiry: 28 days Cost per pack: €2.89	Brand: Liposic® Gel Strength: 0.20 % Pack size: 10 g In-use expiry: 28 days Cost per pack: €2.91	Brand: Liquivisc® Gel Strength: 0.25 % Pack size: 10 g In-use expiry: 28 days Cost per pack: €2.96	Brand: Vidisic® Gel Strength: 0.20 % Pack size: 10 g In-use expiry: one month Cost per pack: €3.16	Brand: Xailin® Gel* Strength: 0.20 % Pack size: 10 g In-use expiry: 28 days Cost per pack: €2.89	Brand: Artelac® Strength: 0.32 % Pack size: 10 ml In-use expiry: 28 days Cost per pack: €2.30	Brand: Liquifilm Tears® Strength: 1.40 % Pack size: 15 ml In-use expiry: 28 days Cost per pack: €2.15
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Second-Line Treatment Options: Sodium Hyaluronate

Sodium Hyaluronate (All are preservative-free)

Brand: Artelac® Every Day Strength: 0.24 % Pack size: 10 ml In-use expiry: 6 months Cost per pack: €5.96	Brand: Blink® Intensive Strength: 0.2 % Pack size: 10 ml In-use expiry: 45 days Cost per pack: €6.35	Brand: HydraMed® Strength: 0.2 % Pack size: 10 ml In-use expiry: 3 months Cost per pack: €5.67	Brand: Hylo-Care® Strength: 0.1 % Pack size: 7.5 ml In-use expiry: 6 months Cost per pack: €6.54	Brand: Hylo-Forte® Strength: 0.2 % Pack size: 7.5 ml In-use expiry: 6 months Cost per pack: €6.72	Brand: Hy-Opti Strength: 0.1 % Pack size: 10 ml In-use expiry: 8 weeks Cost per pack: €6.16	Brand: Hy-Opti Strength: 0.2 % Pack size: 10 ml In-use expiry: 8 weeks Cost per pack: €6.72	Brand: Hylo-Tear® Strength: 0.1 % Pack size: 7.5 ml In-use expiry: 6 months Cost per pack: €6.16	Brand: Thealoz® Duo Strength: 0.15 % Pack size: 10 ml In-use expiry: 3 months Cost per pack: €6.75
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Eye ointments for additional lubrication

Eye drops for additional lubrication

Brand: Hylo Night® Pack size: 5 g In-use expiry: 6 months Cost per pack: €2.91	Brand: Lacri-Lube® Pack size: 5 g In-use expiry: 28 days Cost per pack: €3.07	Brand: Lacri-Lube® Pack size: 3.5 g In-use expiry: 28 days Cost per pack: €2.43	Brand: Xailin® Night Pack size: 5 g In-use expiry: 60 days Cost per pack: €2.76	Brand: Artelac® Night Pack size: 10 ml In-use expiry: 6 months Cost per pack: €6.46
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Daily Dose Units (DDU)

Single Dose Units (SDU)

Sodium Hyaluronate	Carbomer	Carmellose			Hypromellose			Hytellose	
Brand: HydraMed® Strength: 0.2 % Pack size: 0.5 ml DDU x 30 In-use expiry: 12 hours Cost per pack: €5.67	Brand: Vidisic® Strength: 0.20 % Pack size: 0.6 ml SDU x 30 In-use expiry: single use Cost per pack: €8.31	Brand: Carmellose sodium (Alissa) Strength: 0.50 % Pack size: 0.4 ml SDU x 30 In-use expiry: single use Cost per pack: €3.50	Brand: Celluvisc Strength: 0.50 % Pack size: 0.4 ml SDU x 30 In-use expiry: single use Cost per pack: €3.89	Brand: Celluvisc Strength: 1.00 % Pack size: 0.4 ml SDU x 60 In-use expiry: single use Cost per pack: €10.50	Brand: Xailin® Fresh Strength: 0.50 % Pack size: 0.4 ml SDU x 30 In-use expiry: single use Cost per pack: €3.50	Brand: Artelac® Strength: 0.32 % Pack size: 0.5 ml SDU x 30 In-use expiry: single use Cost per pack: €5.59	Brand: Artelac® Strength: 0.32 % Pack size: 0.5 ml SDU x 60 In-use expiry: single use Cost per pack: €9.59	Brand: Hydromoor® Strength: 0.30 % Pack size: 0.4 ml SDU x 30 In-use expiry: single use Cost per pack: €4.32	Brand: Minims® Artificial Tears Strength: 0.44 % Pack size: 0.5 ml SDU x 20 In-use expiry: single use Cost per pack: €7.08

For more information on directions for use, please refer to the individual product information.

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MMP Version 1.0 December 2021