

Position Statement

Varenicline (Champix®) 0.5mg and 1mg tablets for smoking cessation

Recommendation:

Varenicline (Champix®) 0.5mg and 1mg tablets are unavailable until further notice.

Patients currently prescribed this treatment will require review and **switching to nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) unless contraindicated. No new patients should be initiated on varenicline (Champix®) products.**

Please note: Bupropion (Zyban®) is not considered an appropriate alternative for those clients already using varenicline (Champix®). **Specialist smoking cessation services should not request GPs to prescribe bupropion (Zyban®) as an alternative to varenicline (Champix®).**

Helping a patient to stop smoking should not be delayed if they are motivated to stop as other effective options are available.

Background:

Pfizer, the sole supplier of varenicline (Champix®), stopped the distribution of all varenicline (Champix®) 0.5mg and 1mg tablets in early June 2021. Pfizer are currently unable to confirm when resupplies will become available following global regulatory investigations relating to the presence of nitrosamine impurities.

Further details are available via:

<https://www.cas.mhra.gov.uk/ViewandAcknowledgment/ViewAlert.aspx?AlertID=103160&UNLID=7872921222021101221230>

References

1. UK Department of Health and Social Care. Supply Disruption Alert SDA/2021/006. Champix® (varenicline) 0.5mg and 1mg tablets – Supply Disruption. Issued 24th June 2021. Available via: <https://www.cas.mhra.gov.uk/ViewandAcknowledgment/ViewAlert.aspx?AlertID=103160&UNLID=7872921222021101221230> [accessed online: 01/11/21].
2. National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training. Switching from varenicline (Champix) to an alternative stop smoking medication. Accessed via <https://www.ncsct.co.uk/usr/pub/Guidance%20on%20switching%20from%20Champix.pdf> [accessed online: 05/11/2021].

Please access this guidance via the LSCMMG website to ensure that the correct version is in use.

Version Control

Version Number	Date	Amendments Made	Author
Version 1.0	November 2021	New document.	AG

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