IRISH MEDICINES BOARD

Methylphenidate-Containing Medicines – Availability of Web-based Educational Tools

Methylphenidate* is a CNS stimulant currently authorised in Ireland as part of a comprehensive programme for the treatment of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children 6 years of age and over when remedial measures alone prove insufficient. The IMB previously highlighted issues associated with its use, most recently following an EU review in 2009 to highlight guidance to support safe and effective use.[1] Web-based prescribing tools have recently been made available at **www.methylphenidate-guide.eu** This website contains materials to aid the prescriber in the decision to prescribe and also to aid with the monitoring of patients treated with methylphenidate-containing products.

The materials on the website should be read in conjunction with current versions of the product information (Summaries of Product Characteristics are available at www.imb.ie). Healthcare Professionals are additionally reminded of the following recommendations:

- Treatment with methylphenidate should be supervised by a specialist in childhood or adolescent behavioural disorders
- Diagnosis should be made according to DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th edition) criteria or ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases, 10th revision) guidelines, and should be based on a complete history and evaluation and not solely on the presence of one or more symptom(s)
- Children and adolescents should have rigorous pre-treatment screening, including a complete history and relevant examination (including psychiatric disorders or symptoms, cardiovascular status, height, and weight)
- Patients should be monitored regularly during methylphenidate treatment, including: blood pressure and pulse; height, weight, and appetite; onset or worsening of psychiatric symptoms (such as depression, suicidal thoughts, hostility, anxiety, agitation, psychosis, or mania); and symptoms suggestive of heart disease (which should prompt specialist cardiac evaluation)
- Treatment should be interrupted at least yearly to determine whether continuation is needed

Advice for Healthcare Professionals

- Be aware of the prescribing and monitoring recommendations for the appropriate use of methylphenidate-containing medicines as outlined in the Summaries of Product Characteristics.
- Web-based prescribing tools for methylphenidate-containing medicines are available at **www.methylphenidate-guide.eu**
- The prescribing tools are intended to act as a resource to aid prescribing decisions and ongoing monitoring of patients.
- The prescribing tools should be used in conjunction with the product information for each individual product.
- Please report suspected adverse reactions associated with use of methylphenidate to the IMB, via the online reporting/downloadable form options (**www.imb.ie**) or by telephone at (01) 6764971.

Key message

- Prescribing and monitoring advice for appropriate use of methylphenidate-containing medicines should be followed.

* *Products available include Concerta XL Prolonged Release Tablets, Medikinet Tablets, Medikinet MR Modified Release Capsules, Ritalin Tablets, Ritalin LA Prolonged Release Capsules, Equasym XL Modified Release Capsules*

Reference: *1- European Medicines Agency (EMA). EMA makes recommendations for safer use of Ritalin and other methylphenidate-containing medicines in the EU. 21 January 2009. Available at www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/news_and_events/news/2009/11/news_detail_000218.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058004d5c1. Accessed 16/04/2013.*