

## **PRESCRIBING RESTRICTIONS FOR GENERIC SILDENAFIL REMOVED**

**On August 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 legislation came into effect removing prescribing restrictions for generic sildenafil.**

Prescribing of drugs for erectile dysfunction (ED) was restricted nationally on the grounds of cost to the National Health Service. The prescribing restrictions for generic sildenafil have been removed as a consequence of Viagra® losing its patent and generic preparations of sildenafil being available much more cheaply.

**Prescribing restrictions have only been removed for generic sildenafil. Prescribing restrictions are still in place for in patent and branded ED treatments.**

### **Patients who have been prescribed sildenafil privately**

As a result patients who have been prescribed sildenafil privately because they did not meet the SLS eligibility criteria are able to have generic sildenafil prescribed on the NHS.

**When prescribing these products please consider that these drugs do have a street value and quantities should be agreed after a discussion with the patient assessing realistic needs.**

Please note the Health Service Circular 1999/148 recommends that the frequency of treatment will need to be considered on a case by case basis with research evidence about the frequency of sexual intercourse (Johnson A, Wadsworth J, et al, Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles Survey, UK 1990-91, 1994) showing that the average frequency of sexual intercourse in the 40-60 age range is once a week. The advice is that one treatment a week is therefore appropriate for most patients.

### **Patients who cannot tolerate generic sildenafil**

Patients who cannot tolerate generic sildenafil and do not fall within the category of patients eligible to have an alternative branded ED treatment will not be able to have an alternative branded ED treatment prescribed on the NHS by a GP.

Patients who cannot tolerate generic sildenafil and who are as a result experiencing serious distress will continue to be able to access in patent branded ED treatments through NHS specialist services, where clinically appropriate, as the statutory restrictions apply only to prescribing by General Medical Practitioners.

The CCG medicines management team will monitor and share with practices prescribing data to track spending patterns following the changes.

The Prescribing Clinical Network will be reviewing the local guidelines for erectile dysfunction later this year and this process will take into account this new legislation.