From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride
and Chief Pharmaceutical Officer
Dr Norman Morrow

Department of
Health, Social Services and Public Safety
www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

AN ROINN
Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí

MÄNNYSTRIE O
Poustie, Resydènter Heisin an Fowk Siccar

HSS MD 16/2010

Medical Directors, HSC Trusts *(onward cascade to relevant prescribers)*
All General Practitioners
Heads of Pharmacy and Medicines Management at Trusts and HSC

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate, Belfast, BT4 3SQ

Tel: 028 9052 0563
Fax: 028 9052 0574
Email:michael.mcbride@dhsspsni.gov.uk
Email:norman.morrow@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Our Ref: HSS MD 16/2010

Date: 12 April 2010

Dear Colleague

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRESCRIBING AND MONITORING OF RED LIST SPECIALIST MEDICINES

Following concerns raised by General Practitioners in response to an increase in monitoring requests, the Regional Group on Specialist Medicines wishes to clarify the issue of responsibility for monitoring of patients on treatment with hospital supplied Red list medicines.

Prescribers should be aware that for Red list drugs, both prescribing and clinical responsibility (including any associated monitoring) should remain with the specialist. Prescribers are referred to the Red Amber list (www.ipnsm.hscni.net) and in particular to one of the criteria used in defining a red list medicine:

> "The GP is unable to monitor therapy sufficiently to oversee treatment or adjust the dose where necessary to ensure safety".

General practitioners who care for patients on treatment with hospital supplied red list medicines should be aware that they are not advised to take on any responsibility for patient monitoring associated with these medicines.

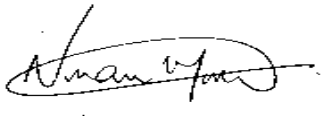
It is accepted that there may be instances, where some patients are having blood samples taken locally at their GP practice. In this case a distinction between facilitating the taking of blood samples, and interpreting and actioning the results should be made by the prescribers. GPs should have a commitment from the specialist to monitor the red list drug treatment in full (which includes following up on

results of tests as well as dealing with any instances where patients do not attend for tests) when such an arrangement is in place.

Further advice on prescribing and monitoring of specialist medicines, and the Red Amber list is available from www.ipnsm.hscni.net

Yours sincerely





DR M MCBRIDE
Chief Medical Officer

DR N MORROW
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

This letter is available at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk and also on the DHSSPS Extranet which can be accessed directly at http://extranet.dhsspsni.gov.uk or by going through the HPSS Web at http://www.n-i.nhs.uk and clicking on DHSSPS.