

Levemir Discontinuation and managing availability of alternatives

You should already be aware that Levemir, the only brand of insulin detemir in the UK is being discontinued by its manufacturer by the end of this year. A DHSC medicines supply notice applies (MSN/2025/036U). This MSN, issued in August 2025 stated that clinicians should begin implementing switches for existing patients in line with clinical guidance provided. The clinical guidance is linked to from the Devon Joint formulary.

The MSN identified alternative insulins that might be clinically appropriate and made remarks regarding their availability to support an increase in demand. It has emerged that insulin availability has become a dynamic issue including differing availability depending upon specifics of dose presentation (ie prefilled pens, refill cartridges etc).

NHS Devon ICB medicines optimisation team, the Devon Local Medical Committee and Community Pharmacy Devon (the Devon Local Pharmaceutical Committee) encourage proactive information sharing between local community pharmacies and medical practices regarding alternative insulin availability. It is further encouraged that medical practices ensure that switching of patients on Levemir progresses in a gradual manner across the practice list by making use of the annual diabetes review (where this will occur before the end of this year). In this way it is hoped that sudden increase in demand to an alternative will not stress supply chains. However we recognise that Devon is not alone in this and that action in other areas of the country may influence the supply picture so practices and pharmacies should be ready to consider other alternative insulins in this situation. The clinical guidance gives examples of a number of insulins that could be considered.

Practitioners are reminded that Devon LMC and Community Pharmacy Devon collaborated to produce a stock availability notification form to aid liaison with practices about the availability of possible alternative products when a patient presents a prescription for a product with supply difficulties. This may also serve as means of communication regarding current availability of alternative insulins that practices could consider when switching a Levemir patient. This form is available on the Community Pharmacy Devon website ([stock availability notice from pharmacy to GP editable PDF – Devon](#))

The key messages are

- Levemir will be permanently discontinued by the end of the year
- Consider switching patients in a planned, gradual way
- Frequent communication between pharmacies and practices on availability issues of the alternative insulins during this process should help minimise difficulties for patients obtaining the prescribed alternative and less disruption for pharmacies and medical practices.

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