

From the Chief Medical Officer  
Dr Michael McBride



Department of  
**Health**

An Roinn Sláinte

Máinnstríe O Poustie

[www.health-ni.gov.uk](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk)

**HSS(MD) 24/2018**

**For Action:**

Chief Executive PHA  
Chief Executives HSC Trusts/NIAS (for onward cascade to all relevant staff)  
Chief Executive HSCB (for onward distribution to all General Practitioners, including GP Locums and relevant practice staff;  
Practice Managers, Dental Practitioners and Community Pharmacies)  
Chief Executive RQIA (for onward distribution to independent providers, including independent hospitals and dental practices providing solely private dental care)

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Our Ref: HSS(MD) 24/2018

Date: 10 October 2018

Dear Colleague

**ADRENALINE FOR ANAPHYLAXIS KITS – A REMINDER TO HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS**

Those of you who prescribe and dispense EpiPen® and EpiPen Junior® adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) will be aware of the recent letter **HSS(MD) 23/2018** on EpiPen® and EpiPen Junior® adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs) that advises conserving supplies for patients who truly need them. Some healthcare professionals may be holding EpiPens®, or other AAIs, in preference to adrenaline ampoules to treat anaphylactic reactions; this should not be necessary.

All healthcare professionals providing services where anaphylaxis treatment may be required, including but not exclusive to flu vaccination services, should have the competency to draw up and administer adrenaline from ampoules with a normal syringe and needle.

Due to the current shortage of adrenaline auto-injectors, we ask that when you renew the adrenaline in your anaphylaxis kits, you alert all your staff to please stock ampoules (ensuring you also include dosing charts, needles and syringes), or pre-filled syringes if appropriate training in their use has been provided, and not AAIs. This will reduce the reliance on AAIs and therefore preserve essential EpiPen® stocks for patients, parents, carers, teachers, etc. who, as lay persons, cannot be expected to administer adrenaline via a needle and syringe.

The British National Formulary, [Green Book](#) and [Resus Council guidance](#) provides additional advice to healthcare professionals on the use of adrenaline in response to anaphylaxis. Pharmacists providing vaccination services may also wish to refer to

PSNC FAQs. Supplies of adrenaline ampoules and pre-filled syringes are currently available and there is an expectation that healthcare professionals should use these in preference to the EpiPen® or similar devices.

Thank you in advance for your help with this matter.

Yours sincerely



**Dr Michael McBride**  
**Chief Medical Officer**  
**Officer**



**Dr Mark Timoney**  
**Chief Pharmaceutical**



**Simon Reid**  
**Chief Dental Officer**



**Prof Charlotte McArdle**  
**Chief Nursing Officer**

## **CIRCULATION LIST**

Executive Medical Director/Director of Public Health, Public Health Agency  
*(for onward distribution to all relevant health protection staff)*  
Assistant Director Public Health (Health Protection), Public Health Agency  
Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency  
Assistant Director of Pharmacy and Medicines Management, Health and Social Care Board *(for cascade to prescribing advisers and onward distribution to Community Pharmacies)*  
Directors of Pharmacy HSC Trusts  
Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB  
Director of Integrated Care, HSCB  
Family Practitioner Service Leads, Health and Social Care Board *(for cascade to GP Out of Hours services)*  
Medical Directors, HSC Trusts *(for onward distribution to all Consultants, Occupational Health Physicians and School Medical Leads)*  
Nursing Directors, HSC Trusts *(for onward distribution to all Community Nurses, and Midwives)*  
Directors of Children's Services, HSC Trusts  
RQIA *(for onward transmission to all independent providers including independent hospitals)*  
Medicines Management Pharmacists, HSC Board *(for cascade to prescribing advisers)*  
Regional Medicines Information Service, Belfast HSC Trust  
Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service, Northern HSC Trust  
Donna Fitzsimons, Head of School of Nursing & Midwifery QUB

Sonja McIlfatrick, Head of School of Nursing, University of Ulster  
Donna Gallagher, Open University  
Caroline Lee, Clinical Education Centre  
Bria Mongan, Director for Adult Services and Prison Healthcare within SEHSCT for  
onward transmission to relevant staff  
University health contacts

This letter is available on the Department of Health website at  
<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications>