



Department of

**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

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AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÄNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

From The Chief Pharmaceutical Officer
Dr Norman Morrow
Castle Buildings
Upper Newtownards Road
Belfast BT4 3SJ

Telephone: 028 90 523219

Facsimile: 028 90 522335

E-Mail: norman.morrow@dhsspsni.gov.uk

For Action: Assistant Director Pharmacy and Medicines Management
HSC Board & BSO
Directors of Pharmaceutical Services of HSC Trusts
Regional Quality Improvement Authority

Our Ref: PHC/5/11

Date: 9 March 2011

DRUG ALERT

MEDICINES DISCONTINUATION INFORMATION

Dear Healthcare Professional

AstraZeneca UK Ltd

**Pulmicort CFC-free Inhaler 100 & 200 micrograms and NebuChamber Spacer Budesonide
PL 17901/0247 and PL 17901/0246**

AstraZeneca UK Ltd has discontinued production of the above products with **immediate effect** due to complex manufacturing issues. The NebuChamber spacer is only licensed for use with these two inhaler presentations. This issue does not apply to any other AstraZeneca inhalers or components which will remain in normal supply and use.

Patients can continue using PULMICORT CFC-free Inhaler 100 and 200 micrograms until their current supply is finished. At that time, patients should be changed to an appropriate alternative inhaled corticosteroid treatment for their specific medical condition.

Guidance on equipotent doses of alternative inhaled corticosteroids can be found in the BTS/SIGN British Guideline on the management of asthma

<http://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/Portals/0/Clinical%20Information/Asthma/Guidelines/sign101%20revised%20June%202009.pdf>

AstraZeneca has advised us that the following medicines contain Budesonide for inhalation and may provide suitable alternative treatments for these patients, in accordance with approved labelling:

Budesonide Alternatives	Manufacturer
Pulmicort Turbohaler (100, 200 and 400mcg) A dry powder inhaler	AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals
Easyhaler Budesonide (100, 200 and 400mcg) A breath-actuated device (dry powder)	Orion Pharmaceuticals
Novolizer Budesonide 200 mcg Inhalation Powder A cartridge device that is breath-actuated	Meda Pharmaceuticals

Please note *none of these alternatives are licensed for use in children under 5 years*

Please note that alternative inhaled corticosteroid medicines may require different inhalation techniques for correct dose delivery compared to PULMICORT CFC-free inhaler and patients may require advice on correct usage and may need assessment on their ability to use the device. It should also be noted, that some formulations contain lactose and should not be used in at-risk patients.

Patients who are prescribed a suitable alternative medicine or device should be monitored frequently in the normal way for the emergence or worsening of symptoms, or adverse events.

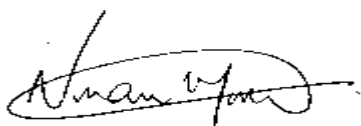
For other information regarding the product, please call AstraZeneca Medical Information on 0800 783 0033 or email at: medical.informationUK@astrazeneca.com.

If you have any questions relating to the supply of this product, please call AstraZeneca Supply Chain Team on 0800 032 0501 or email at: supply.chain@astrazeneca.com.

HSC Board/RQIA should bring this information to the attention of private hospitals/clinics registered with them and any other relevant care facilities.

The Business Services Organisation is asked to bring this information to the attention of Community Pharmacists and General Medical Practitioners directly.

Yours sincerely



DR NORMAN MORROW
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

For information:
CMO
CNO
CDO
CSSO
SMO
Director, Health Estates
Public Health Branch
DHSSPS, Library
Extended nurse prescribers

Regional Medicines and Poisons Information Service
Regional Director of Supplies
RPQAS
Pharmaceutical Society of NI
Senior Prison Pharmacist
Prison Service, Dundonald House
Nursing Officer, Health Estates
Medical Officer, Castle Buildings
Regional Procurement Pharmacist
NICPLD