

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE USE OF QUETIAPINE Version 4

The Horizon Scanning and Prescribing Guidance Sub Group of the Drugs & Therapeutics Committee have considered the available evidence for the use of quetiapine within the Trust.

### BACKGROUND

Quetiapine is a second generation antipsychotic with a low affinity for D1, D2 and 5HT2 receptors and a moderate affinity for adrenergic alpha receptors.

### DOSAGE FORM AND LICENSED INDICATIONS

Since the patent for Seroquel expired, quetiapine is available in two dosage forms immediate release (IR) and modified release (MR). The IR form is administered twice daily; the MR form once daily.

Both are licensed for the following indications:

- Treatment of schizophrenia
- Treatment of manic episodes associated with bipolar disorder
- Treatment of major depressive episodes in bipolar disorder
- Recurrence prevention of mania and depression in bipolar disorder

Quetiapine MR is also licensed for adjunctive treatment in major depressive disorder.

Due to the risk of postural hypotension, therapy with quetiapine requires an initiation period of gradually increasing dose. For the IR form this period is five days; for the MR it is two days.

For doses and further information on cautions, contra-indications, side effects and drug-drug interactions, please consult the latest edition of the British National Formulary.

### UNLICENSED INDICATIONS

NICE Clinical Guideline 185 Bipolar Disorder states that for patients with moderate to severe depressive symptoms, if the patient is already taking an antimanic drug that is not an antipsychotic, addition of quetiapine may be considered.

NICE Clinical Guidelines 90 & 91 state that quetiapine may be used to augment antidepressant treatment in the event of an inadequate response.

In addition, the prescribing of a low dose (25-50mg daily) of quetiapine may be considered for the treatment of anxiety.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Quetiapine may be prescribed for all the above indications.

There are treatment cost differences between using the two generic formulations (IR and MR) and within the Trust

- The IR formulation must be routinely prescribed and recommended for use
- Use of the MR formulation must be reserved for rapid treatment initiation only.

Inpatients initiated on quetiapine MR should have the formulation they are prescribed reviewed during the inpatient stay and be discharged on the IR formulation.

Decisions exceptional to this must be discussed with a pharmacist, documented in the clinical notes and this information conveyed to the patient's General Practitioner.

**Horizon Scanning and Prescribing Guidance Sub-group of the Drugs and Therapeutics Committee  
31 October 2014**

**Review date: 21 October 2017**