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Our Ref: GenericsPL

Dear Patient,

Use of Generic (unbranded) Medicines across NHS Grampian: How it affects you

In NHS Grampian we have asked all prescribers to ensure that all patients are prescribed generic medicines wherever possible.

Branded versions of medicines cost significantly more than generic (unbranded) medicines. Generic medicines are essentially a copy of the branded version and are subject to the same strict controls in terms of manufacturing and safety (unlike other own brand products we might buy in the supermarket). A number of different companies make each generic medicine; therefore a generic may differ from their branded equivalent in size, shape, colour and sometimes taste but they contain the same drug as the branded medicine they are a copy of.

If it is clinically important that you receive a specific brand, your prescriber will continue to prescribe by brand. UK level guidance is available that describes what these clinically important situations are and when branded prescribing should be used.

If there is no clinically important reason for prescribing the branded version you will receive the generic one, in line with NHS Grampian guidance, even if up until now you have received a branded product.

The use of generic medicines over branded medicines also applies to biologic medicines; if a biosimilar medicine is available it is this product that will be prescribed.

If you have any questions or concerns about this switch then please speak to your pharmacist or your doctor. Please remember that they are being required to help with this switch from expensive branded versions to less expensive unbranded medicines.

Finally, thank you for supporting NHS Grampian in making the best use of the public monies we receive to provide healthcare to you, your family and community.

Yours sincerely



David Pflieger
Director of Pharmacy



Dr Hugh Bishop
Medical Director