

DIVIZJONI TAS-SAHHA

Palazzo Castellania, 15, Triq il-Merkanti,
Il-Belt, CMR 02
Malta

**HEALTH DIVISION**

Palazzo Castellania, 15 Merchants Street,
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MHEC Circular No 167/07**29th October 2007****Attention all Medical Practitioners
Pharmacists**

Re: Candesartan and Valsartan Interchange

Angiotensin II Receptor Antagonists (Sartans) are indicated for the treatment of congestive heart failure and hypertension.

Valsartan 80mg and 160mg tablets are being procured by the Government Pharmaceutical Services (GPS) instead of the candesartan 8mg and 16mg tablets. As a result, all new patients requiring a sartan will be started on valsartan. Conversely, patients currently taking candesartan tablets shall be changed over to valsartan tablets within a two months interchange period. After this change-over period, candesartan will no longer be available.

Sartan	Preparations undergoing interchange	
Candesartan	8mg scored tablets	16mg scored tablets
Valsartan	80mg scored tablets	160mg scored tablets

As from November 2007, the prescribers, including general practitioners (GPs), are to supply patients with a prescription for candesartan carrying the alternative option for valsartan. The prescription must include each respective dosage regimen in line with the licensed indications provided by the Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC) of each medicinal product. When the patient presents the prescription for candesartan / valsartan, the dispensers are to dispense candesartan if there are any remaining stocks at the pharmacy. If candesartan stocks will have been already depleted, then the patient will be given valsartan. Once a patient is changed over from candesartan to valsartan, then he/she is to be prescribed valsartan only.

For any further information on valsartan, kindly refer to the Summary of Product Characteristics (SPCs) and Patient Information Leaflets (PILs) available at <http://medicinesauthority.gov.mt/products/search.htm>

I thank you in advance for your cooperation so as to render the interchange as smooth as possible for all patients concerned.

Dr Natasha Azzopardi Muscat
Director General Strategy & Sustainability

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29/10/2007

Għażiż pazjent,

Nixtieq ninfurmak li l-medicina candesartan (Atacand[®]) 8mg u 16mg mhix se tibqa' fuq il-Formularju tas-Servizzi tas-Sahha tal-Gvern u minflok se jkun hemm valsartan (Diovan[®]) 80mg u 160mg. Candesartan u valsartan huma t-tnejn medicini li jigu uzati ghat-trattament ta' pressjoni gholja u "congestive heart failure".

Dawn il-punti li ghejjin ghandhom jigu meqjusa:

- Candesartan (Atacand[®]) mhux se jinstab aktar fl-ispizeriji ta' l-isptar u c-centri tas-sahha, izda valsartan (Diovan[®]) se jigi provdut.
- Pazjenti ghandhom jinfurmaw lit-tobba bil-medicini kollha li jkunu qed jiehd.
- F'kaz ta' xi diffikulta`, il-pazjenti ghandhom jiehd parir minghand it-tabib taghom.

Dejjem tieghek,

Dr N. Azzopardi Muscat
Direttur Generali (Strategija & Sostenibilita)

Dear Patient,

Please note that the medication candesartan (Atacand[®]) 8mg and 16mg is being replaced by valsartan (Diovan[®]) 80mg and 160mg on the formulary of the Government Health Services. Candesartan and valsartan are both used for the treatment of hypertension and congestive heart failure.

The following points should be considered:

- Candesartan (Atacand[®]) will no longer be available from the government hospitals and health centres, but valsartan will be available instead.
- Patients must inform doctors of all medicines they are taking.
- Patients should consult their doctor in case of difficulty.

Sincerely,

Dr. N. Azzopardi Muscat
Director General (Strategy & Sustainability)