

Accessing rarely used antidotes – procedure for hospitals within the Yorkshire and the Humber region

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1. Background and Purpose

In Jan 2017, the Royal College of Emergency Medicine (RCEM) and National Poisons Information Service (NPIS) produced an updated document “Guideline on Antidote Availability for Emergency Departments”¹. The guideline is divided into 4 sections; antidotes that should be available:

- I. immediately in the Emergency Department
- II. within 1 hour (i.e. within the hospital),
- III. supra-regionally and
- IV. those that are not essential.

[Appendix 1 of the RCEM guidelines](#) provides information on recommended stock levels and storage conditions². The document advises users to consult Toxbase (www.toxbase.org) / the BNF / and/or the NPIS for further information including dosage and indications.

Historically, some of these antidotes have not been accessible according to these recommendations, and hospitals have tried to borrow from other hospitals within the region. This is, in part, thought to be due to the high cost and low usage of some of these products. The Yorkshire Chief Pharmacists Group is keen to ensure that antidotes are accessible within an acceptable period of time (both in and out of hours), and that the financial risk of expired stock is shared around the region. The following procedure has been agreed by them and relates largely to drugs in sections II and III of the guideline. It explains which antidotes are held centrally for use by hospitals within the region, and how to obtain them.

2. Scope

This document outlines the processes involved in obtaining some of the antidotes listed in sections II and III of the RCEM guidance, namely:

<u>Section II</u>	<i>Relevant SOP section</i>	<u>Section III</u>
Digoxin-specific antibody fragments (5.1.1)		*Sodium calcium edetate injection (5.2.1)
		*DMSA (succimer) capsules (5.2.1)
		*DMPS (unithiol) injection (5.2.1)
		*DMPS (unithiol) capsules (5.2.1)
		*Berlin Blue soluble (5.2.1)
		*Botulinum antitoxin (5.2.2)
		*Pralidoxime injection (5.2.2)
	#Glucarpidase (5.2.3)	

Antidotes (above) marked with an asterisk are available at specific hospitals within the region for use by any hospital within the region. All other antidotes in section I or II of the guidance should be stocked by each individual Trust. If a Trust chooses not to stock the antidotes recommended in section I or II, it is expected that if these products are required, the Trust has arrangements in place to obtain them from local wholesalers/suppliers. No other borrowing should occur within the region unless exceptional circumstances prevail, or prior local agreements are in place. With the exception of penicillamine tablets, which are frequently stocked by hospitals for other indications, it is unnecessary to stock antidotes listed in sections III and IV of the guidance, unless discussed below.

Glucarpidase is a very expensive antidote for methotrexate toxicity. It is not stocked at any hospital in the Y&H area. It can be obtained from the manufacturer 24 hours a day 7 days a week. See 5.2.3.

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The following Trusts have signed up to this procedure:

Airedale NHS Foundation Trust
Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust
Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust
Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Sheffield Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

3. Responsibility

- 3.1. It is the responsibility of each individual Trust within the Yorkshire region to ensure they regularly review their antidote holdings as per the RCEM recommendations.
- 3.2. It is the responsibility of each Trust to ensure that procedures are in place to obtain antidotes that are not specifically discussed in this document.
- 3.3. For section II and III antidotes that are stocked in the pharmacy department at LTHT St James's University Hospital, for use within the Yorkshire region:
 - It is the responsibility of the pharmacist in the requesting hospital to complete the necessary documentation (attached) and to forward to LTHT St James's University Hospital pharmacy department.
 - It is the responsibility of the pharmacy department at LTHT St James's University Hospital to ensure that these antidotes are in stock and in date.
 - It is the responsibility of LTHT pharmacy department to ensure that a member of staff is available 24 hours a day to handle any urgent requests.
- 3.4. It is the responsibility of the Leeds Medicines Advisory Service to liaise with the NPIS on a regular basis to ensure the shared stockholdings are still appropriate for the needs of the Yorkshire region.
- 3.5. It is the responsibility of the Leeds Medicines Advisory Service to review this SOP on an annual basis to ensure the information within it remains accurate.

4. Equipment

Access to a telephone
Access to a fax machine

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5. Procedure

5.1. Section II antidotes (should be available within 1 hour – i.e. within the hospital)

Digoxin -specific antibody fragments have historically often been obtained from large hospitals within the region when needed. This is no longer acceptable and each Trust should arrange for their own supply.

- 5.1.1. **Digoxin-specific antibody fragments (Digifab®):** - Digifab® is only available during normal working hours direct from BTG Plc (Tel: 0207 575 0000 Mon-Fri).

Toxbase should be consulted to find the most up-to-date suppliers and their contact details for the above products (www.toxbase.org).

5.2. Section III antidotes (can be held supra-regionally)

- 5.2.1. The following antidotes are stocked at LTHT St James's University Hospital pharmacy department for use by Trusts within Yorkshire and the Humber region (see "Scope" above) and can be obtained both in and out of hours. All are unlicensed medicines. For specific product descriptions and pack sizes see request form in appendix 1.

Sodium calcium edetate injection

DMSA (succimer) capsules

DMPS (unithiol) injection and capsules

Berlin Blue soluble (Prussian Blue) Capsules

If you require one or more of these antidotes:

- 5.2.1.1. Contact either the dispensary responsible pharmacist (in-hours) or the on-call pharmacist (out of hours) at LTHT St James's University Hospital:
Telephone: In hours: 0113 2064215 (9am – 7.30pm, 7 days a week)
Out of hours: switchboard 0113 2433144, then bleep the on-call pharmacist
- 5.2.1.2 Discuss with the LTHT St James's University Hospital pharmacist the antidote / quantities required and then agree the amount to be sent. Original packs will not be split. Toxbase/NPIS can advise on doses and duration of treatment.
- 5.2.1.3 Complete the form "Request for supply of Antidote" (Appendix 1 of this procedure). Print off on hospital headed paper and fax or email to the number/email address requested by the pharmacist at St James's. Post the original to the address on the form; write on "*duplicate copy - original order faxed/emailed <insert date>*" before posting.
- 5.2.1.4 Within normal working hours, arrange transport to collect the item from St James's University Hospital, Gledhow Wing Pharmacy Department. Out of hours the on-call pharmacist at LTHT St James's University Hospital will usually organise transport,

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unless agreed otherwise.

5.2.1.5 The LTHT St James's University Hospital pharmacist will process the order and send it to the address requested, together with an "Unlicensed Medicines Record of Supply" form.

5.2.1.6 On receipt of the goods, complete and sign the Unlicensed Medicines Record of Supply form, acknowledging receipt of the product. Fax or email back to the contact on the form.

5.2.1.7 An invoice for the product (and for transport costs if arranged by the LTHT St James's University Hospital pharmacist) will follow at a later date.

5.2.2 **Botulinum antitoxin and pralidoxime** – drugs stocked by Public Health England holding centres of which there are three in the region:

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Telephone: In hours: 0113 2064215 (9am – 7.30pm, 7 days a week)
Out of hours: switchboard 0113 2433144, then bleep the on-call pharmacist

Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Telephone: In hours: 01482 675622 (8.30am - 6pm Mon-Fri, Sat 9.30am-5.30pm,
Sun 9.30am -4.30pm)
Out of hours: 01482 875875, then ask for the on-call pharmacist

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Telephone: In hours: 0114 2714166 Pharmacy Stores (7am - 4pm Mon-Fri)
0114 2715544 Dispensary (4pm - 7pm Mon-Fri &
Sat/Sun 9am - 4pm)
Out of hours: switchboard 0114 2434343, then bleep the on-call pharmacist

Contact any of the above centres and follow the procedure explained to you by the supplying hospital. (Form "Request for supply of Antidote" (Appendix 1 of this procedure) can be used for requests – follow procedure above, sections 5.2.1.2 – 5.2.1.7 for requests from Leeds only.)

5.2.3 **Glucarpidase** - due to the cost of this antidote for methotrexate toxicity, it is not stocked at any hospital in the Y&H area. Its use should be discussed with NPIS. If a supply is needed it can be obtained from Clinigen Group 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The contact details are

Within office hours:

Tel: 01283 494 340
Fax: 01283 494 341

Out of hours:

Email: outofhours@clinigengroup.com
Phone number: 07741 242858

5.2.4 For advice on where to obtain other Section III antidotes, please contact the NPIS and/or check Toxbase.

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Additional Information : Antivenoms - Exotic Species

The UK Department of Health has a stock of antivenoms (antiserums), which are held at two main sites. Access to these antivenoms (antiserums) is available to the NHS but clinical authorisation is required and advice from an expert and it is on a named patient basis. Contact NPIS for further advice.

5.3 Section IV antidotes – not essential to hold

For advice on where to obtain Section IV antidotes, please contact the NPIS and/or check Toxbase.

6 References:

1. Guideline on Antidote Availability for Emergency Departments, Jan 17. Royal College of Emergency Medicine/NPIS. <http://www.toxbase.org/General-Info/Antidotes---doses-and-sources/>
Review date Jan 2020
2. Guideline on Antidote Availability for Emergency Departments (Dec 2013), Appendix 1. Stock levels and storage recommendations. Royal College of Emergency Medicine. <http://www.toxbase.org/General-Info/Antidotes---doses-and-sources/>
review date Jan 2020
3. National Poisons Information Service Clinical Toxicology Database. <http://www.toxbase.org/>

7 Abbreviations:

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure
RCEM: Royal College of Emergency Medicine
NPIS: National Poisons Information Service
BNF: British National Formulary
LTHT: Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Request for Supply of Antidote-Leeds

FAO Pharmacist: (please name the pharmacist that request was discussed with)

Pharmacy Department
Gledhow Wing
St James's University Hospital
Beckett Street
Leeds
LS9 7TF

Please supply:
(tick as appropriate)

Quantity Requested:
(order multiples of original packs)

Pralidoxime 1g injection (packs of 6 vials)

Berlin Blue soluble (Prussian Blue) 500mg capsules (packs of 36)

Botulinum antitoxin intravenous infusion (250ml bottle pack) or
botulinum antitoxin vial (1 x 20ml)

Sodium calcium edetate 5% injection (packs of 10 x 10ml)

DMSA (succimer) 100mg capsules
(please order number of capsules as this will be packed down)

DMPS (unithiol) 250mg in 5ml injection (packs of 5 x 5ml)

DMPS (unithiol) 100mg capsules (packs of 20)

Signed (Pharmacist):

Print name:

GPhC number:

Contact Phone number:

Date:

Delivery address if different to header:

Invoice address if different to header:

Request for Supply of Antidote-Sheffield

FAO Pharmacist: (please name the pharmacist that request
was discussed with)

Pharmacy Department
Northern General Hospital
Herries Road
Sheffield
S5 7AU
Fax: 0114 2714401

Please supply:
(tick as appropriate)

Quantity Requested:
(order multiples of
original packs)

Pralidoxime 1g injection (packs of 6 vials)

Botulinum antitoxin intravenous infusion (250ml bottle pack) or
botulinum antitoxin vial (1x20ml)

Signed (Pharmacist):

Print name:

GPhC number:

Contact Phone number:

Date:

Delivery address if different to header:

Invoice address if different to header:

Request for Supply of Antidote-Hull

FAO Pharmacist: (please name the pharmacist that request
was discussed with)

Pharmacy Department
Hull Royal Infirmary
Anlaby Road
Hull
HU3 2JZ

Please supply:
(tick as appropriate)

Quantity Requested:
(order multiples of
original packs)

Pralidoxime 1g injection (packs of 6 vials)

Botulinum antitoxin intravenous infusion (250ml bottle pack) or
botulinum antitoxin vial (1x20ml)

Signed (Pharmacist):

Print name:

GPhC number:

Contact Phone number:

Date:

Delivery address if different to header:

Invoice address if different to header: