

**From the Chief Medical Officer
Professor Sir Michael McBride**



HSS(MD) 14/2024

FOR ACTION

Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/HSC Trusts/NIAS
Deputy Secretary SPPG
GP Medical Advisers, SPPG
All General Practitioners and GP Locums (for onward
distribution to practice staff) and Community
Pharmacies
OOHs Medical Managers (for onward distribution to staff)

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Our Ref: HSS(MD) 14/2024

Date: 17 May 2024

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST

Dear Colleague

MHRA Drug Safety Update –

- 1. Finasteride: reminder of the risk of psychiatric side effects and of sexual side effects (which may persist after discontinuation of treatment)**
- 2. Montelukast: reminder of the risk of neuropsychiatric reactions**

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) have issued the below Drug Safety Updates.

Healthcare Professionals are asked to note and action the advice for healthcare professionals, advice for healthcare professionals to provide to patients, parents and carers, and recommendations contained within the Drug Safety Updates.

Please find links to the complete **MHRA Drug Safety Updates** included below:

- [1. Finasteride: reminder of the risk of psychiatric side effects and of sexual side effects \(which may persist after discontinuation of treatment\)](#)
Introduction of patient cards for men taking finasteride and raising awareness of the risk of psychiatric side effects and sexual dysfunction.**
- [2. Montelukast: reminder of the risk of neuropsychiatric reactions](#)
Reminder to healthcare professionals to be alert of the risk of neuropsychiatric reactions in patients when prescribing montelukast and advice for patients to seek medical advice immediately if neuropsychiatric reactions occur.**

Report suspected reactions on a Yellow Card

Please continue to report suspected adverse drug reactions to the [Yellow Card scheme](#). The report will help the MHRA safeguard public health. Healthcare professionals, patients, and caregivers are asked to submit reports using the Yellow Scheme electronically using:

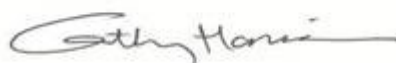
- the [Yellow Card website](#)
- the Yellow Card app; download from the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play Store](#)
- some clinical IT systems for healthcare professionals

When reporting, please provide as much information as possible, including information about medical history, product brand name, batch numbers, any concomitant medication, onset timing, treatment dates and particularly if a side effect continued or started after treatment was stopped.

Yours sincerely



Professor Sir Michael McBride
Chief Medical Officer



Professor Cathy Harrison
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

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This letter is available on the Department of Health website at
[https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-
advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications)
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