

Position statement: Inhaler switching in adults aged 18 years or over

Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG supports practices to switch brands of inhaler where the alternative option represents a more cost effective treatment to the NHS, is of comparable efficacy and is clinically appropriate for the patient.

Key considerations:

- Inhaler switches should only take place during a **face-to face consultation** with the patient. The patient should have their condition reviewed and be counselled on the new inhaler device. Switching a patient's inhaler by letter is not appropriate.
- Consider whether the patient is suitable to be stepped down (see IESCCG adult asthma step down quick reference guide)
- Before switching, consider patient preference and ability to use the inhaler device
- Some inhalers are only licensed for certain conditions or ages. Licensed inhalers should be used in preference to inhalers used off-license. Patients should not be switched from a licensed inhaler to an unlicensed inhaler on cost grounds alone.
- Add a spacer device (e.g. Space Chamber Plus Compact) if patient using/switching to an MDI inhaler
- Recommend the patient speak to their local pharmacy for an NMS (new medicines service) review. Practices can also refer patients directly if preferred. The pharmacy will usually see patients within a month of initiating a new medicine and will assess compliance, patient understanding and identify any other concerns.
- Avoid switching patients during an exacerbation, periods of ill health, and during pregnancy.

Counselling points:

- Inhaler technique for all inhalers:
 - Dry powder device: 'Fast from the start'
 - Metered dose inhaler: 'Long, slow inhalation'
- New dose regimen
- In use expiry of new device:
 - Ellipta device (Relvar, Incruse and Anoro): 6 weeks once removed from packaging
 - Seebri Breezhaler: Dispose of device after 30 days of use
 - Fostair MDI: 5 months after dispensed from pharmacy
 - Fostair NEXThaler: 6 months after opening pouch
 - Flutiform: 3 months after opening the foil pouch

See also [IESCCG Adult Asthma Step-Down Quick Reference Guide](#) for suggested step down switches

Suggested switches (for patients 18 years and over only):

Condition	Switch from...	Dose	Annual cost		Switch to...	Dose	Inhaler type	Picture	Annual cost
COPD	Seretide Evohaler 250mcg [unlicensed indication]	2 puffs BD	£724	Or	Relvar Ellipta 92/22	1 puff OD	Breath-actuated dry powder inhaler		£338
	Seretide Accuhaler 500mcg	1 puff BD	£498						
	Symbicort Turbohaler 200/6mcg	2 puffs BD	£462						
	Symbicort Turbohaler 400/12mcg	1 puff BD	£462						
	Spiriva Handihaler (tiotropium) 18mcg	1 capsule OD	£408-£424	Or	Seebri Breezhaler (glycopyrronium) 55mcg	1 capsule OD	Capsule-based, breath-actuated dry powder inhaler		£335
	Spiriva Respimat (tiotropium) 2.5mcg	2 puffs OD	£408						
Asthma	Seretide Evohaler 250mcg	2 puffs BD	£724	Or	Flutiform 250mcg	2 puffs BD	Metered dose aerosol inhaler		£554
	Symbicort Turbohaler 400/12mcg	2 puffs BD	£925						
	Seretide Evohaler 125mcg	2 puffs BD	£426	Or	Fostair 200/6	2 puffs BD	Metered dose aerosol inhaler OR Breath-actuated dry powder inhaler (NEXThaler)		£357
	Symbicort Turbohaler 200/6mcg	2 puffs BD	£462						
					Flutiform 125mcg	2 puffs BD	Metered dose aerosol inhaler		£341
					Fostair 100/6	2 puffs BD	Metered dose aerosol inhaler OR Breath-actuated dry powder inhaler (NEXThaler)		£357