

Policy Statement; Prescribing of alprostadil cream for erectile dysfunction is not supported

Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group does not support the prescribing of alprostadil cream (Vitaros[®]) for erectile dysfunction.

Alprostadil cream (Vitaros[®]) for erectile dysfunction, was launched in the UK in June 2014, it is non formulary and **should not** be prescribed in Mid Essex.

Vitaros[®] contains 300 microgram alprostadil in a cream formulation for topical application to the penis. Alprostadil is chemically identical to prostaglandin E1, the actions of which include vasodilatation of blood vessels in the erectile tissues of the corpora cavernosa and increase in cavernosal artery blood flow, causing penile rigidity.

After application of alprostadil cream, the onset of action is within five to 30 minutes and the effect lasts for 1-2 hours after dosing.

Localised penile irritation, including burning, pain and erythema, was the most commonly observed adverse reaction, but was generally transient and mild to moderate in severity. Adverse reactions may also occur in partners of patients using topical alprostadil, so use of latex condoms is advised and must be ensured for sexual intercourse with women who are of childbearing potential, pregnant or lactating.

Sildenafil is the **only treatment for erectile dysfunction on the formulary**. The patent on sildenafil expired in June 2013 and prescribing sildenafil generically can generate significant savings compared with prescribing by brand name. Sildenafil should only be prescribed on the NHS to patients who meet treatment criteria set out in the Department of Health guidance on treatment for impotence (HSC 1999/148).

Providers commissioned to provide services on behalf of Mid-Essex CCG are reminded that they are required to follow the Mid-Essex CCG formulary and prescribing guidance as detailed in their contract (Medicines Management Service Specification).

See Mid-Essex CCG website – Medicines Optimisation page for all prescribing guidance:
<https://midessexccg.nhs.uk/medicines-optimisation>

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