

Policy Statement; The prescribing of tramadol 37.5mg/paracetamol 325mg (Tramacet®) is not supported.

Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group does not support the prescribing of tramadol 37.5mg/paracetamol 325mg (Tramacet®) as it is not a cost effective option and lacks evidence of superior efficacy and safety.

Recommendations:

- **Do not prescribe Tramacet® in any new patients.**
- Existing patients should have Tramacet reviewed.
- Consider switching to either paracetamol and codeine either as single agents or combined as co-codamol 30/500 OR Zapain®.

Rationale for switching from Tramacet® to an alternative pain medicine

- There is no evidence that Tramacet® is more effective or safer than paracetamol 500mg and codeine 30mg (both as individual drugs, or combined as co-codamol 30/500).
- Tramadol is not included in the advice given by the British Pain Society and Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for options in the management of mild to moderate pain.
- Tramadol appears on the World Health Organisation's (WHO) pain ladder as a weak opioid between the WHO step two analgesics for moderate pain (such as dihydrocodeine) and the WHO step three analgesics (strong opioids such as morphine) for severe pain. However, there is little evidence of the efficacy of tramadol from clinically useful trials (particularly in primary care, chronic pain and cancer pain).
- Compound analgesic preparations that contain a simple analgesic (such as paracetamol) with an opioid component reduce the scope for effective titration of the individual components in the management of pain of varying intensity. Furthermore, the dose of paracetamol contained in Tramacet® is not optimal.
- The advantages of using compound analgesic preparations have not been substantiated. The addition of a low dose of an opioid can result in opioid side-effects (e.g. constipation) and can complicate treatment of overdose without any additional pain relief. The elderly are particularly susceptible to the side effects of opioids.

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

See Mid-Essex CCG website – Medicines optimisation page for all prescribing guidance:

<http://midessexccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services/medicines-optimisation>

Title	Tramadol 37.5mg/paracetamol 325mg (Tramacet®)
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Previous version	Key Changes
N/A	New policy
August 2017	Amend alternative analgesia recommendations