



Dispensing and the drive for environmental sustainability

Going Greener – Dispensing and the drive for environmental sustainability – Assessment of Combination Long-Acting Beta Agonists (LABAs) and Inhaled Corticosteroids (ICS) Part 3

We continue our journey to transform Respiratory care to the lowest possible carbon impact by looking at Combination LABA plus ICS inhalers this month. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) inhaler propellants contained in pMDIs (pressurised Metered Dose Inhaler) were recognised as ozone depleting substances and were phased out in the UK by 1996. CFCs were replaced by ‘CFC-free’ inhalers containing hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). Although HFCs are not ozone depleting substances, they are powerful greenhouse gases which can contribute to global warming. Carbon emissions from inhalers have been assessed as being responsible for approximately 3% of all NHS carbon emissions.

The NICE patient decision aid gives an indicative range for DPI (Dry Powder Inhalers) and pMDIs:

- DPIs (1 dose (two puffs)): 20 g CO2e per dose
- pMDIs (two puffs): 500 g CO2e per dose

This is, unfortunately, not the full story, as some pMDIs have a higher indicative carbon footprint when compared with other pMDIs.

Even though the Environmental Sustainability indicators have been removed from the Investment and Impact Fund (IIF) 2023/24 Incentive scheme, there is still a great need to reduce the carbon footprint of inhalers.

Most LABA Plus ICS products are available as both MDIs and DPIs. Dispex has assessed the impact on profitability of all these inhalers and this information can be accessed via the **Brand Comparisons** section of the Dispex website which is a Members’ only resource. The profitability comparisons include figures on the website showing the profitability of prescribing generically and dispensing a particular brand, which can make a significant difference between dispensing at a loss and ensuring your dispensary viability.

The following 6 combinations are available:

Beclometasone + Formoterol
Budesonide + Formoterol
Fluticasone + Formoterol
Fluticasone + Salmeterol
Fluticasone + Vilanterol
Mometasone + Indactерol

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We take an in-depth view of Beclometasone + Formoterol as there are now 3 manufacturers with only one supplying DPIs. Switching MDIs to cheaper products should be relatively easy, but switching to DPIs requires a check on inhaler technique. To see the profitability of these products, members can view the data within our Brand Comparisons section – Inhalers – Combinations Beclometasone + Formoterol.

Note that the price of both strengths of Luforbec has dropped to the same price as Bibecfo from 30th October 2023. There is still the same percentage discount available on Luforbec.

Brand	Strength	Co	Doses	Basic Price	Aerosol vs Non-Aerosol
Formoterol +Beclometasone					
Bibecfo	100	Cipla	120	£13.98	MDI
Bibecfo	200	Cipla	120	£13.98	MDI
Fostair Nexthaler	100	Chiesi	120	£29.32	BADPI
Fostair Nexthaler	200	Chiesi	120	£29.32	BADPI
Fostair	100	Chiesi	120	£29.32	MDI
Fostair	200	Chiesi	120	£29.32	MDI
Luforbec	100	Lupin	120	£13.98	MDI
Luforbec	200	Lupin	120	£13.98	MDI

In the next edition of the Gazette, Dispex will be looking at the remaining LABA plus ICS Combination Inhalers.

We will be assessing the potential impact some of these might have on dispensary viability, alongside the importance of the drive to ensure environmental sustainability. We will be offering choices for dispensing practices and member practices can access the profitability impact of those choices.

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