

## Procedure

### High strength insulin (Humulin R® U500)

#### 1 Scope

For clinical staff to safely manage patients admitted into the Trust on high strength Humulin R U500 (500 units per ml) insulin.

#### 2 Purpose

To detail the responsibilities of clinical staff around the safe management of patients admitted into the Trust on high strength Humulin R U500 (500 units per ml) insulin.

#### 3 Responsibilities

##### 3.1 Initiation in outpatient clinic

Patients attend the national severe insulin resistance clinic.

If a decision is made to start Humulin R U500 insulin then the GP will be contacted and shared care agreed. A shared care guideline will be sent to the GP.

The national severe insulin resistance clinic staff will enable/activate the 'high strength insulin' alert with the hospital information support system (HISS)/ order communications system (OCS).

The patient will also be asked national severe insulin resistance clinic which community pharmacist they regularly use and this pharmacy will be contacted and provided with details of companies from whom they can order supplies of Humulin R U500.

The initial outpatient prescription for Humulin R U500 insulin will be issued for the first month's supply. Patients may receive up to three months supply in total until shared care is arranged. **The Addenbrooke's inpatient pharmacy will dispense (the pharmacy will store in a separate location to other insulins).**

**(Note: Humulin R U500 is an unlicensed insulin available from IDIS)**

##### 3.2 Admission and inpatient management

When a 'high strength insulin' alert is received in the 'pharmacy alerts mailbox' pharmacy staff should follow the process outlined in figure 1 below.

## Pharmacy

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### **3.2.1 Monday-Friday**

Pharmacy medicines information will check the alert pharmacy alerts mailbox between 9am and 5pm and alert ward pharmacists of any relevant admissions.

### **3.2.2 Weekend/bank holiday**

The senior pharmacist on the weekend team should check the alert pharmacy alerts mailbox and contact the ward.

## 4 Figure 1: Process for managing admitted patients

### Patient admitted

Prescriber should contact pharmacist (out of hours – resident pharmacist). The pharmacist should review the drug chart and check any patient's own supplies. If pharmacist not on ward, must visit ward:



**Pharmacist to check patient's own Humulin R U500 insulin supplies and ensure clearly labelled. Ward must store this in patient's POD locker only.**

**Pharmacist to review diabetic chart and any medication brought into hospital and to ensure (a visit to the ward will be required).**

**Drug chart records clearly:**

- Humulin R U500 insulin.
- Check with patient/ward that dose and timings for the insulin is correct.
- Amends the word units in the dose box to "marks" .
- Endorse "use insulin syringe"
- Endorses the word "vial".
- Attach "High Strength Insulin" sticker to diabetic drug chart
- Check with the patient/nurses that they are self-administering the insulin (if they are well enough) and ask nurses to complete appropriate paperwork- all patients should be allowed to self administer this insulin.

**3. Contact severe insulin resistance team** in working hours by telephone or email [severeinsulinresistance@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:severeinsulinresistance@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

Dr Anna Stears 01223769046

Dr Robert Semple 01223 769305

Dr David Savage 01223 767923

Sr Julie Harris 01223 336080

Sr Charlotte Jenkins-Liu 01223 216655

**Out of hours**

**Weekend until 2pm: Bleep 156 2095 (diabetes specialist registrar (SpR))**

**diabetes consultant on-call via switchboard**

**Advise prescriber to contact diabetes specialist nurse/ registrar to review patient.**

**Pharmacist to ensure at discharge that discharge letter is clear and that all supplies of Humulin R U500 insulin on the ward are returned to patient or destroyed**

### **5 Monitoring compliance with and the effectiveness of this document**

The diabetes and endocrinology department and relevant clinical governance committee will review incidents and reports related to high strength insulin on a regular basis and take action as appropriate.

### **Equality and diversity statement**

This document complies with the Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust service equality and diversity statement.

### **Disclaimer**

It is **your** responsibility to check against the electronic library that this printed out copy is the most recent issue of this document.

### **Document management**

Approval:	Joint drug and therapeutic committee (JDTC) – 1 November 2012		
Owning department:	Pharmacy		
Author(s):	Anna Stears		
File name:	High strength insulin procedure version1 Nov 2012.doc		
Supersedes:	n/a (new document)		
Version number:	1	Review date:	November 2015
Local reference:		Media ID:	<a href="#">28427</a>

**Appendix 1: Drug chart stickers for diabetic chart on Humulin R U500 Insulin**

**Humulin R U500 INSULIN  
prescribed  
This insulin is five times the  
strength of normal insulin.  
This insulin is prescribed in  
'marks'  
Use an insulin syringe**