

Pharmacy department

# Changing from branded to generic pirfenidone medicine

## Information for patients, relatives and carers

### Introduction

You are currently prescribed Esbriet®, which is the branded version of the medicine pirfenidone. The hospital will now be prescribing you the generic medicine pirfenidone. This leaflet will explain more about branded and generic medicines and what the difference is. Please feel free to speak to your pharmacist, nurse or doctor if you have any questions.

### What are generic medicines?

Generic medicines are identical to the branded medicines because they contain the **identical active ingredient** to give you the same clinical effect. Until now, one pharmaceutical company had exclusive rights to create and license pirfenidone (because they had a 'patent'). The patent for Esbriet® has now expired. This means that other pharmaceutical companies can also manufacture and license the medicine, and there is more competition and lower prices. These generic medicines are identical to the branded medicines in dosage form, safety, strength, route of administration and quality. Generic medicines are commonly used in the NHS.

### How effective are generic medicines?

The companies that make generic medicines must show the licensing authority very strict evidence of their effectiveness, safety and quality. Generic medicines have been thoroughly tested and analysed in the laboratory to make sure they work in the same way as the original branded medicine and are just as effective. Generic medicines are approved for use by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the European Medicines Agency who make sure that there are no noticeable differences between the generic and the original branded product.

### What are the benefits of generic medicines?

Using generic medicines benefits all the users of the NHS as they are usually provided at a much lower price than the original branded medicine. This helps the NHS provide more complex medicines at better prices and use these cost savings to improve treatment for more people with conditions like yours.

The generic medicine that we are switching you to contains the same active ingredient, pirfenidone. The treatment for your condition remains unchanged and we do not expect you to notice any changes to your lung condition after switching to generic pirfenidone. There will be no changes to your current dose as a result of the generic switch and you will continue to receive the same amount of pirfenidone at the same time intervals. You will continue to receive your pirfenidone via homecare deliveries with no changes to current delivery schedules.

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## Contact details

The information in this leaflet is not intended to replace your doctor's or pharmacist's advice. If you need more information or have any questions, please speak to your doctor or contact the hospital's medicines helpline.

Medicines helpline: **020 3311 1703**, Monday-Friday, 09.00 – 17.00.

## How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777** (10.00 – 16.00, Monday to Friday). You can also email PALS at [The PALS team](mailto:pals@imperial.nhs.uk) will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street, London W2 1NY

Email:

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

## Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:

[imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

## Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: [www.imperial.nhs.uk](http://www.imperial.nhs.uk)

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